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OFF-FARM MIGRANTS: A CASE STUDY OF
CHARACTERISTICS AND ADJUSTMENTS

by



G. WAYNE LAMBLE

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance a thesis entitled "Off-Farm Migrants: A Case Study of Characteristics and Adjustments," submitted by G. Wayne Lamble, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

ABSTRACT

Technological changes and urbanization have been taking place at a rapid rate in many parts of Alberta and have induced farm to non-farm migration in the high-income Red Deer area as well as the low-income Bonnyville district. While personal characteristics of the migrants do not differ much from those of the majority of farmers, the migrants tend to come from smaller than average farms in terms of capital value, acreage, and production. Consequently, inadequate farm income is the predominant cause for migration from farming.

Smooth occupational readjustment of these low-income families is impeded by difficulties in finding satisfactory alternatives and solving the many uncertainties involved in migration. Advancing age, low levels of education, and lack of non-farm job training or experience are the major impediments. However, the many migrants who have non-farm experience before migration and find non-farm work within their home community experience few difficulties. Most migrants are satisfied with their non-farm situation and nearly all have experienced increases in their family income since leaving the farm.

The diversity in the characteristics of rural people and the results of this study indicate that a coordinated variety of programs to meet a variety of needs is required to effectively facilitate adjustment of agricultural resources.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Setting

The basic farm problem, arising from a complex configuration of technological and social developments, is a growth problem. The whole structure of farming has lagged in adjustment to the tremendous developments in agriculture during the twentieth century. In the early 1900's the average farmer produced enough food for four or five persons; today he produces enough for about 40 people. Since 1946 labor productivity in Canadian agriculture has been growing about 5.0 percent per year--almost twice the 2.6 percent per year increase in the manufacturing sector.

By increasingly substituting capital and technology for manual labor, agricultural productivity has been increased greatly. However, the inelastic nature of the demand for farm products has contributed to the accumulation of surpluses and the depression of farm prices. In the face of rising input costs farm incomes have been depressed drastically.

The situation, then, is that there are too many resources in farming relative to the demand for farm products. Consumers indicate through their purchases and prices offered that they prefer more of these resources be used for other products and services. Though great claims have been made for the efficiency of the agricultural industry, many farm operators are unable or unwilling to make the adjustments. Farms that did not make adjustments in recent years are becoming further and further

out of adjustment as more technology is developed and productivity increased. Therefore, an increasingly large farm segment is characterized by maladjustment and gross deficiencies. These farms (and they are almost exclusively family farms) are falling into a relatively low-income category, and they are now being recognized as a national problem.

The Problem

The associated phenomena of declining farm numbers and increasing size of farms indicates one form of adjustment occurring in response to the complex conditions affecting Canadian agriculture over the past two or three decades. The number of farms in Canada declined from 732,832 in 1941 to 430,522 in 1966, a reduction of about 40 percent. Over this 25-year period the average size of farms increased 70 percent from 237 acres to 404 acres.

These figures represent a large exodus of farm people from agriculture to other sectors of the economy. However, the need for future transfers from farming is evidenced in the fact that 46 percent of the farmers in Canada had gross sales of less than \$3,750 in 1966. The proportion of low output farms is even greater in some regions like Census Division 12 of Alberta where 60 percent of the farms had gross sales of less than \$3,750 in 1966. Such regions contain a high proportion of potential off-farm migrants. A survey of farmers in the Bonnyville district of Census Division 12 in 1965 revealed that 44 percent of the operators were willing to leave farming for regular non-farm occupations.¹

¹George E. Buckmire, Occupational Mobility of Farm People in The Bonnyville District: A Low-Income Agricultural Area, Department of Agricultural Economics Special Report No. 1 (Edmonton: The University of Alberta, 1966), p. 97.

However, because of various impediments to occupational mobility of farmers many operators stay in farming despite the cost-price squeeze until their deteriorating situation forces them out of farming. Although this forced exodus partially corrects the overall situation, it is too slow and brings chronic hardship to many farm families. In the case of the Bonnyville farmers, "Low levels of education, lack of alternative job training and job opportunities, immediate security in farm living and an uncertainty about moving off farms, were among factors found to be important in contributing to the immobility of farm families".¹ Thus, many low-income farm families find themselves trapped in a web of circumstances from which they are unable to untangle themselves. Although they would like to transfer from farming to non-farm occupations, they are unable to do so because of certain inter-related personal, social-psychological, and economic factors.

Population mobility is necessary for the efficient operation of our modern, urban-industrial society. The patterns of industrial growth and change are likely to accelerate the restructuring of the labor force. It seems likely that the opportunity and necessity for workers to change their careers will also be accelerated to the extent that inter-generational changes in occupations will no longer keep up with the obsolescence of skills.² A great many individuals and families accept and even welcome migration because they believe it will bring them

¹Ibid., pp. iv-v.

²Harold A. Pederson, "Family Mobility--Rural and Urban," Family Mobility in Our Dynamic Society (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1965), pp. 56-68.

enhanced status, a higher level of living, or other benefits they desire. But the "stickiness" associated with farming tends to inhibit free flow of human resources from farming to other occupations.

Rapid progress or adoption of new technology must be accompanied by rapid economic and social adjustments. Man has made outstanding progress in increasing productivity, but he has not done nearly as well in solving the problems of economic and social development. He has made large investments in research to develop new farming techniques, directly and indirectly aimed at replacing farm labor, but he has almost neglected the problems associated with transferring such labor to alternative employment opportunities.

Most of the large-scale movement of farm-reared people to non-farm occupations that has occurred during the last quarter century has been without government intervention or assistance. This process might be considered a natural adjustment to the imbalances between sectors of the economy. However, it has been a slow and costly process. Modern technology and values dictate that all segments of the economy operate with reasonable efficiency and provide every citizen with the opportunity to earn a "decent" living. Consequently society as a whole has an interest in eliminating problems associated with human resource transfers and an obligation to the families squeezed out of agriculture as well as to those remaining in it. This statement emphasizes this point:

The justification for government expenditures on human development and adjustment services to migrants may be derived from a variety of evaluative criteria appropriate to a democratic society: e.g., the happiness and well-being of individual citizens; the provision of equitable opportunities for all; realization of the full productive potential of all members of the society in order to increase the well-being of the whole; and protection of the society from the consequences of social

dislocation and personal disorganization.¹

Given the need and the desire for public intervention and assistance in the transfer of human resources from farming to other occupations, it is necessary that the factors that give rise to migration and the factors associated with the consequences of migration be understood. In particular, the basic interrelationships among variables concerned with family mobility must be understood to reduce the uncertainty surrounding the family decision making process to move or not to move from the farm. The importance of studying migration has been summarized as follows:

Everywhere we see the centripetal force of migration dominant in the world, from the less developed areas to the more developed areas, from the smaller to the larger population aggregates. The most important migrations today are the internal and largely unrecorded migrations from rural to urban areas and within metropolitan areas. In the United States, greater mobility is leading to rapid changes in the population distribution and composition. Other countries in the world are less mobile but mobility is an integral part of economic and social development, and as yet there is no end in sight of the trend toward greater and greater mobility. The scientific analysis of migration is a matter of rapidly growing importance in the world today.²

Migration information is fundamental to the formulation of effective human development policy and action programs. To achieve full employment, to provide a more equitable distribution of income and wealth, in other words, to alleviate the areas of poverty which continue to disgrace so many areas there must be an understanding of the circumstances to be

¹Jane A. Abramson, Adjustments Associated With Migration From Farm Operator to Urban Wage Earner, (Saskatoon: The Canadian Centre of Community Studies, 1966), p. 2.

²Dudley Kirk, "Major Migrations Since World War II," Selected Studies of Migration Since World War II (New York: Milbank Memorial Fund, 1958), p. 29.

created and services to be provided to encourage successful mobility and adjustment.

The Objective

Despite the fact that numerous studies have been done concerning off-farm migration, actual research in the area of established farmers out of agriculture has been much more limited, particularly in Canada. The rapid rate of progress in the development of more efficient farming methods has meant that a large number of farm operators from the more stable middle years are leaving the farm for non-farm employment. However, the sparcity of knowledge in this area does not provide immediate and complete answers to such questions as: what are the characteristics of those families who leave farming? what prompts them to leave farming? where do they move to and what kind of employment do they get? does their move give them greater satisfaction with their life situation? and above all, what kinds of human development services are necessary for these people?

The overall objective of this study was to provide more information, insight, and understanding into the movement of established farmers from farming to non-farm occupations. Attention was focused on the individual farm operator and his family involved in this off-farm migration to learn some of the characteristics of these people, the circumstances surrounding their decision to move, and finally, the consequences of the move. In each of these three major areas of concern, a secondary objective was to determine the differences between relatively low and high income districts with respect to off-farm migration. Specifically the objectives were:

1. To ascertain some of the social and economic characteristics associated with families who leave farming and to compare

these with those of non-migrants,

2. To determine the factors which seemed to be important in the decision-making process of these mobile families to leave the farm for non-farm employment, and
3. To determine the changes in the well-being of these people after leaving the farm.

The Procedure

The population of the study consisted of formerly established farmers in two selected areas of Alberta who had left farming to enter non-farm occupations. The areas selected were a low-income farm area, Bonnyville Municipal District, and a high-income farm area, Western Red Deer County (Figure 1). In the summer of 1965 a socio-economic survey of the farmers in these areas was conducted by the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Alberta in conjunction with a study of farm income and population changes. During the interview with each farmer the names and addresses of former farm people in the area who had left their farms since 1951 were obtained. In this manner the names of 489 persons--298 from the Bonnyville area and 191 from the Red Deer area--were collected.

In the summer of 1966 an attempt was made to contact as many of these people as was feasible with respect to limited time, personnel, and finances. The basic element in this population was the family unit, but in each case the respondent to the information sought was the head of the household or former farm operator. To qualify as a former established farmer, the respondent had to have operated his own farm for a minimum of three years before leaving for a non-farm occupation.

Because this study was not concerned with mobility in and out

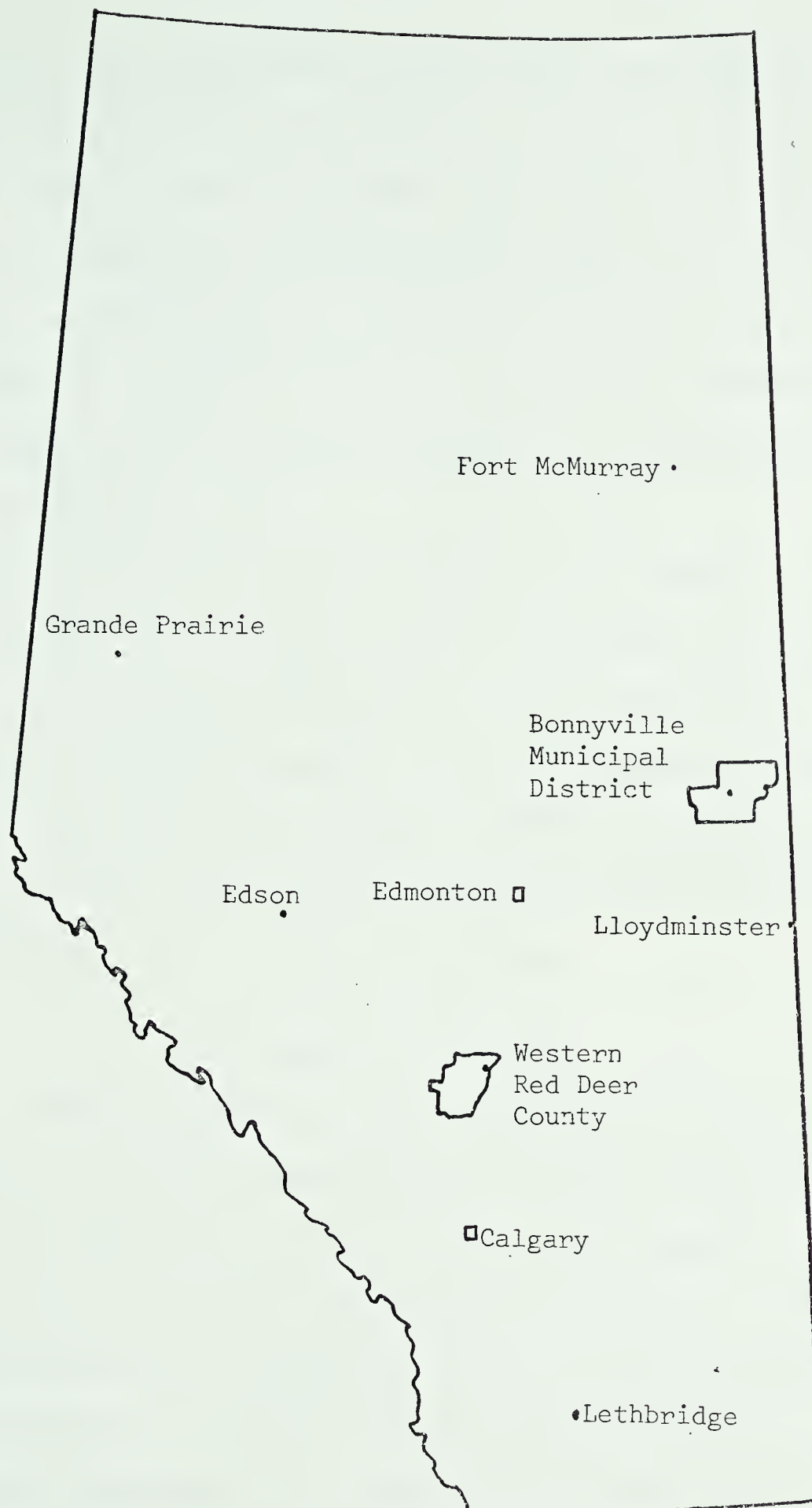


FIGURE 1
LOCATION OF STUDY AREAS,
BONNYVILLE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT AND WESTERN RED DEER COUNTY

of the labor force, but within the labor force, specifically from farm to non-farm occupations, the respondents also had to have obtained (or at least sought) non-farm employment after leaving the farm. Operators who had left farming for retirement were excluded from the survey. Other than these restrictions no discrimination was made on the basis of age, sex, income, or occupational status. On this basis, the study was based on the interviews of 59 off-farm migrants from the Bonnyville area and 31 from the Red Deer area.

An interview schedule was constructed in which an attempt was made to ascertain such things as reasons for movement out of farming, perceived advantages and disadvantages of farm and non-farm residence and work, community participation, former farm characteristics, and post-migration experiences. The schedule¹ included a combination of structured and open questions. Non-directive probes were used to elicit full discussion with respect to the open questions.

The Framework of Analysis

Often the approach has been in migration studies to show how the migrant is faring in comparison to a criterion group, usually his urban reared counterpart. However, this can be misleading. It is unrealistic that farm-reared individuals will do as well as the somewhat advantaged urban-reared counterpart. Even if certain factors like the level of educational attainment are controlled in studying occupational achievement, differences in the quality of education between the two groups may still remain.

¹A copy of the interview schedule may be found in the Appendix C.

The crucial question is whether or not the former farmers have bettered themselves by going into non-farm employment. Although the migrants may compare unfavorably with the criterion group, they may have improved their economic and social position considerably by their own standards. Therefore, it is desirable to have a measurement of their own circumstances, of the socio-economic characteristics of migrants before, immediately after, and at intervals after the move is made. Such a survey is not often possible and before/after migration comparison information is obtained from the migrants after the move. This approach is weak because such comparisons are based on recall which is open to errors of distortion or faults of memory. In retrospect humans often rationalize their behavior. Hence the criterion for measuring the consequences and adjustment of off-farm migration is complex; refinements and a combination of both before/after tests and intergroup comparisons are necessary.¹

The plan of this analysis was first to ascertain the pre-migration situation of the migrants in respect to some of their personal and farm characteristics. These characteristics were compared to those of farmers still farming in the two areas in 1965. The next step was to determine the intervening factors that were involved in the decision-making process to leave farming. Then the post-migration experiences of the former farmers was examined and also compared with their pre-migration situation to determine if any change in their circumstances had taken place as a result of off-farm migration.

¹L. G. Burchinal and W. W. Bauder, "Adjustments to the New Institutional Environment," Family Mobility in Our Dynamic Society (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1965), p. 186.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-MIGRATION SITUATION

Family Composition

The results of this study support the expectation that since many of the families leave farming due to economic stress, the largest families may be the most likely to move in search of better opportunities. Of the 90 respondents, 86 were married when they migrated from the farm. One of the four bachelors has since married. Only 15 percent of the migrants had no children when they migrated. For 10 percent of the families who had children, all their children had already grown up and left the family unit. Thus about three quarters of the migrants had children at home to share in the experience of moving from farm to non-farm conditions.

Statistics indicate that migrant families tended to be larger than families remaining on the farm. Twenty-six percent of the respondents had family units of two or less while 47 percent had five or more members. The average number of members in the migrant families when they left the farm was 4.7, compared to 4.2 for Alberta farm families as a whole in 1961.¹

The average number of children under 24 years old living on the farm with their parents at the time of leaving the farm was also

¹Unless otherwise specified all 1961 data quoted is from: Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961).

larger (2.7) than the average for the Province (2.2) in 1961. The average for the Red Deer migrants-2.5-was much much higher than 1.7 for the farm families in that area in 1965.¹ In the Bonnyville area the corresponding figures were 2.8 children for migrant families and 2.5 for farm families.

The majority of the children of the former farm families were in the unproductive school and pre-school age. As with the non-migrant farm families, very few of the children who had left school continued to live on the farm with their parents. Yet considering that over 40 percent of the migrant families had children in the pre-school age group, many of the respondents had family responsibilities, for several years after leaving the farm, greater than the average family head in the Province.

Age

Decisions related to the farm business and the family household are very often influenced by the family life cycle, in particular, by the age of the head of the household. A review of the literature leads one to conclude that the age structure of the farm population is an important variable in observed occupational migration in agriculture. These previous studies have fairly well established an inverse relationship between age and mobility in which both actual and potential mobility of farmers declines with increasing age.

There are many reasons for this inverse relationship. The years

¹Unless otherwise specified, all 1964 and 1965 data quoted was obtained from a population and agricultural survey conducted by the Department of Agricultural Economics, The University of Alberta in 1965.

of schooling completed tend to decline with age and the quality of the education attained by older persons is often less suited to current non-farm job requirements. Though younger farm people may be disadvantaged by their limited experience in non-farm work, employers are willing to invest in training of younger persons. Younger people enjoy the prospect of more working years in which to benefit from training and a change in employment. They also tend to have fewer economic and social ties with their farms and communities. Consequently, it is usually the older group of farm operators who cling to the security of farm living and the younger men and women tend to be more mobile. This is also one of the reasons that rural communities are often drained of potential leaders and severely handicapped in their social and economic activities.

Evidence provided in this study tends to concur with the generalization that younger farm operators are more mobile than older ones. The highest proportion of migrants were in middle age categories when they left the farm (Table 1). Eighty-three percent of the migrants were between the ages of 30 to 54 years as compared to only 65 percent of the non-migrant operators of farms in 1961. Less than 10 percent of the migrants were under 30 years of age. Similarly, fewer than six percent were 60 or more years of age. In each of the age categories from 25 years to 50 years there was a higher proportion of migrants than non-migrant farm operators. However, the greatest difference appeared in the 35 to 39 years category in which there were six percent more migrants than non-migrants.

The fact that younger farmers move out of farming with greater frequency than the older farmers is also reflected in differences in age averages. The average age of the migrants interviewed was 43 years as

Table 1

AGE OF MIGRANTS^a AND ALBERTA FARM OPERATORS AND NON-FARM LABOR FORCE

Age	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Alberta^b</u>	
			number	percent	Farm	Non-Farm
	percent	percent			percent	
Under 25 years	2	0	1	1	3	17
25 - 34	22	16	18	20	16	30
35 - 44	36	33	31	35	25	24
45 - 54	27	32	26	29	25	17
55 - 64	13	16	13	14	21	9
65 and over	0	3	1	1	10	3
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total	100	100	90	100	100	100
Number	59	31		90		
Minimum	24	29		24		
Maximum	63	66		66		
Mean	42	47		43	47	39

^aAll data referring to migrants in this and subsequent tables is original data obtained in the survey for this thesis in 1966.

^bCanada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, Bulletin 3.1 - 12, Table 17 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961).

compared to the 47 years for all farm operators of Alberta in 1961. The inverse relationship between age and mobility does not appear as strong as one might expect because of the sample design. This study concerned itself with only those people who had been farming for at least three years and had then left farming in search of non-farm employment. Therefore, the migrants interviewed did not include the most mobile group of young people who had left the farm before becoming farm operators on their own for at least three years.

The slight increase in the rate of migration that takes place among people who are 60 years of age or older was not evident in this study. This increase reflects the tendency for the older operators to retire and move off the farm. Retiring farm operators were not included in the study because they do not represent occupational mobility within the labor force. However, the importance of such movement is not to be underestimated because it reduces the amount of unproductive labor on the farms and provides an opportunity for younger men to take over the farms or for farm consolidation.

There were differences in the age distribution of the migrants from the high and low agricultural income areas. The Red Deer migrants tended to be older than Bonnyville migrants. The average age of the Red Deer group was 47 years, the provincial average, as compared to 42 years for the Bonnyville group. The differences are more marked when age distribution is considered. While only 22 percent of Bonnyville migrants were at least 50 years of age, 42 percent of the Red Deer group had already reached 50 when they had left the farm.

It was found that operator age varied according to the main reason for leaving and relatively more people were leaving farming in the Red

Deer area for reasons associated with older ages than in the Bonnyville area. Those who left mainly because of age and declining health averaged 48 years. Those who were forced to leave because of leasing problems averaged 49 years of age as compared with an average age of 40 years for those leaving because of inadequate income.

The observations indicate that off-farm migrants are most likely to leave farming before they are 50 years old, often before they are 40 years old. Generally younger men feel they have more opportunities and can re-establish themselves with less difficulty than those of older ages. Once farm operators reach 45 or 50 years of age, they often recognize their more limited opportunities and are more reluctant to leave if they can manage to stay. However, almost unbearable farming conditions sometimes do force them to leave.

Though off-farm migrants tended to be younger than non-migrant farmers, as a group they were considerably older than the male non-farm labor force in Alberta, particularly metropolitan areas. The average age of migrants was 43 years; the average for the total labor force in Alberta in 1961 was 39 years and 37 years for those in Edmonton and Calgary. Of the migrants who were able to find manual labor non-farm employment, the average age was 35. Only 29 percent of the male non-farm labor force was 45 years of age or older while almost 45 percent of the migrants were in this age category when they were just entering the non-farm labor force. Consequently, many migrants are handicapped by age in seeking satisfactory employment.

Farming Background

A majority, 89 percent, of the migrants had grown up on farms, and often their parents had farmed the same area. Another eight percent

of the migrants had grown up in rural towns before becoming farm operators. Only three percent of the former farmers, all from the Red Deer group, had been urban-reared prior to going into farming.

It is apparent from these statistics that almost all of the migrants were exposed to the trials of farming and had learned their occupation, at least in a practical sense, from a very early age. Moreover, most of these people liked farming and had chosen it as their preferred occupation. For various reasons, however, they had never realized their anticipated satisfactions in farming.

Although a few former farmers had decided to quit farming after only a few years in the business, most of the migrants had worked for many years at establishing a successful farming unit. The migrants on the average had spent 19 years in farming before deciding to leave (Table 2). More than 80 percent of them had 10 or more years of farm operating experience. These people had taken their occupation seriously, for farming was more than an occupation to them; it was "a way of life." Thus the decision to quit farming had a very different significance from the transfer of an urban worker from one job to another.

Ethnic Background and Religious Affiliation

Migration from farms occurred in all the ethnic groups represented in the area and was not identified with any particular group (Table 3). The largest proportion (29 percent) of migrants were of British origin, closely followed by the French Canadians (26 percent). Another major group (21 percent) was of Eastern European origin, predominantly of a Ukrainian ethnic background. The distribution of the ethnic groups corresponded closely to the order in which these groups in the overall farm population of the two areas occurred. For example, in the

Table 2

MIGRANTS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS FARM OPERATORS

Years	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
3 - 9	22	13	17	19
10 - 15	22	26	21	23
16 - 20	26	10	18	20
21 - 25	14	19	14	16
26 - 30	8	16	10	11
Over 30	8	16	10	11
Total	100	100	90	100
Number	59	31	90	
Minimum	3	3	3	
Maximum	40	50	50	
Mean	17.3	21.4	18.7	
Median	17	22	18	

Bonnyville area people of French and Ukrainian ethnic backgrounds constitute the majority of the population. Migration from this area also predominated from these groups, with the people of French backgrounds showing a slightly higher rate of mobility than those of Ukrainian heritage. On the other hand, migration from the farms in the Red Deer areas occurred mainly from the British and German groups, the ethnic groups that predominate in that area.

Like ethnic background, the role of religion in the process of migration is uncertain. Religion has played a significant role in the

Table 3

ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS^a

Ethnic Origin	Bonnyville		Red Deer	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants
	percent		percent	
British	15	12	55	58
French	37	29	3	2
Eastern European	32	46	0	4
Other European	15	12	36	33
Other	1	1	6	3
Total	100	100	100	100

^aUnless otherwise specified all data referring to non-migrants in this and subsequent tables was obtained from a population and agricultural survey conducted by the Department of Agricultural Economics, The University of Alberta in 1965.

process of social and economic development.¹ The influence of the church remains quite strong in many rural communities. In some areas the church provides the only opportunity for social activities.

Respondents came from all religious groups represented in the two areas and in the relative proportions in which these groups occurred in the total population of the respective areas (Table 4). The Roman Catholic Church, especially in the Bonnyville migrant group, and the United Church of Canada, in the Red Deer group of migrants, were the most

¹Walter B. Rogers, The Role of Religion in Social and Economic Development, Special Report No. 4 Department of Agricultural Economics (Edmonton: The University of Alberta, 1967), pp. 1-3.

Table 4

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF MIGRANTS

Religious Affiliation	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>
	percent	percent
Roman Catholic	46	15
United Church of Canada	22	40
Greek Orthodox	11	0
Anglican Church of Canada	4	15
Lutheran	4	10
Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic	4	0
Other	9	20
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100

popular denominations represented. Observed differences between the two areas may be attributed to the differences in ethnic distribution in the population of the respective areas and not to the selectivity of migration. Therefore, no evidence was found to refute conclusions of an earlier study of potential mobility in this region--religious affiliation is not a strong deterrent of mobility.¹ In other words, since migration could not be identified with a particular religious or ethnic group, it appears that neither of these factors significantly influence occupational mobility.

Education

Although a survey of literature indicates no general agreement about intelligence and talents of those who migrate from farms as compared to those who do not, there is considerable evidence that human resources

¹Buckmire, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

become more mobile with increased education. This relationship is caused partly by increased motivation to change that results from educational molding of social and cultural attitudes. Education also provides higher occupational skills, and most important, education appears to increase economic responsiveness. With education people can consider a wider range of information sources and make relocation decisions more readily. Consequently, the rate of off-farm migration is generally higher among the farm people who have had more years of formal schooling. On the other hand, education can also act as an impediment to the migration of farm people. Farm operators with more education may be more successful farmers and not face the economic need to change occupations.

Seventy percent of all the former farm operators had more than grade six education (Table 5). This level of formal education can be considered quite advanced in view of the fact that many of these people were educated at a time when rural educational facilities were quite limited. Indeed, in many rural schools grade eight was the highest possible achievement level. A third of the migrants had more than grade eight education and 10 percent had completed high school.

Generally women had attained higher levels of formal schooling than men. For example, among the migrants from the Bonnyville area 21 percent of the wives had 11 to 12 years of formal schooling compared to only 8 percent for the male migrants. At the lower level, 15 percent of the males had less than five years of schooling compared with only seven percent of the females. The pattern was the same for the Red Deer group, but generally the migrants from this area had more education than their Bonnyville counterparts.

Table 5

NUMBER OF YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING COMPLETED FOR
MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Years of Schooling	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants
	percent		percent		percent
Less than 5	15	17	3	4	11
5 - 6	22	14	13	6	19
7 - 8	39	41	32	45	37
9 - 10	15	23	23	28	18
11 - 12	9	5	29	17	15
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Number	59	131	31	135	90
Minimum	0	0	4	4	0
Maximum	12	12	12	12	12
Mean	7.0	7.0	8.9	8.6	7.7
Median	8		9		8

When the levels of schooling completed by the migrants were compared with those still farming in the respective areas, no broad differences were observed. In the Red Deer area the migrants had completed an average of 8.9 years of school and the non-migrants 8.6 years. Both of these averages were higher than the 7.0 years that both the migrants and non-migrants from Bonnyville had completed. The Bonnyville average was lower because of the relatively high proportion of people who had less than five years of schooling. The high proportion of migrants in the five to six and 11 to 12 years of schooling categories suggests that those with five to six years of schooling may be relatively more susceptible

to "push" factors, and those with 11 to 12 years may be more susceptible to "pull" factors involved in leaving farming than are people in other education levels. Better educated farmers are attracted out of farming by the possibility of increased earning capacity outside of agriculture and by their greater ability to adapt to non-farm conditions. On the other hand, technical changes within agriculture that demand a higher level of education and training drive many farmers out because they are not prepared to participate effectively in agricultural activities.¹

The fact that a slightly higher proportion of farm people with grade 11 and 12 are leaving than are staying on the farm in these districts tends to support the conclusion that the urban environment is exerting a stronger pull upon the abler and more favored rural individuals, a situation hardly favorable to the farming community.² However, the general picture presented in this study closely follows the observation of Hathaway--that since the 1940's there has been less selectivity by age and education in migration from agriculture.³

From the provincial point of view these migrants tended to have educational levels below Alberta farm labor force levels in 1961 and considerably lower than the Provincial non-farm labor force levels (Table 6). Sixty-seven percent of the migrants had less than nine years

¹C. E. Bishop, "Geographic and Occupational Mobility of Rural Manpower," Agricultural Policy Review, VI, No. 2 (1966), 4.

²N. P. Gist and C. D. Clark, "Intelligence as a Selective Factor in Rural-Urban Migration," American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (July, 1938), 36-56.

³Dale E. Hathaway, "Migration from Agriculture:-The Historical Record and Its Meaning," American Economic Review, L (May, 1960), 379-391.

Table 6

NUMBER OF YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING COMPLETED FOR
MIGRANTS AND ALBERTA FARM AND NON-FARM LABOR FORCE

Years of Schooling	<u>Migrants</u>	<u>Alberta Labor Force^a</u>	
		Farm	Non-Farm
	percent	percent	
Less than 5	11	10	4
5 - 8	56	49	28
9 - 10	18	25	25
11 - 12	15	16	43
Total	100	100	100

^aCanada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, Bulletin 3.1 - 4 (Ottawa, 1961).

of schooling as compared to 59 percent of the Alberta farm labor force and 32 percent of the Alberta non-farm labor force. Thus well over one-half of the migrants were educationally disadvantaged with respect to improving their socio-economic status.¹ Low educational attainments, especially associated with older-than-average migrants, greatly restrict the possible range of jobs for which migrants qualify. These circumstances necessarily make training courses more difficult and time consuming. Nevertheless, the amount of formal schooling alone did not appear to significantly impede or encourage farm operators to leave farming.

Alternative Training and Skills

A major factor determining the extent to which individuals participate in the labor force is the possession of skills and special

¹T. P. Omari, "Factors Associated with Urban Adjustment of Rural Southern Migrants," Social Forces, XXXV (1956), 47-53.

training. Previous research points out that lack of training often restricts farmers to non-farm opportunities that are not very favorable alternatives to farm entrepreneurship.¹ Buckmire found that "lack of alternative skills and training were major impediments to occupational mobility."² The lack of skills and alternative training prevented many operators from moving into permanent non-farm employment because the jobs available were usually part-time or seasonal.

About one in every four respondents reported having had some form of additional training prior to leaving the farm. This was not much different from the proportion of farm operators in the Bonnyville area in 1965 that reported having additional training. The types of training reported by the migrants included carpentry, mechanics, plumbing, welding, and some business experience (Table 7). Three respondents had taken courses at agriculture vocational schools. Another had begun a teachers program at University. Most of the others obtained their training in apprenticeships or on-the-job training. Carpentry was an example of the most prevalent type of work in this line.

Training reported by migrant wives generally involved more years of formal training--training for jobs such as teaching, nursing, and clerical work. Twenty-two percent of the wives had some form of training before leaving the farm.

The number of migrants and their wives who had additional or

¹Gerald W. Dean, E. O. Heady, and H. H. Yeh, An Analysis of Returns from Farm and Non-Farm Employment Opportunities on Shelby-Grundy-Haig Soils, Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bul. 451 (Ames: May 1957), p. 114.

²Buckmire, op. cit., p. 118.

Table 7

TYPE OF ADDITIONAL TRAINING REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Type of Training	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	number	number	number
<u>Husband</u>			
Teacher	1	0	1
Vocational Agriculture	1	2	3
Bookkeeping	1	1	2
Carpenter	8	2	10
Plumber	3	1	4
Mechanic	1	3	4
Painter	1	0	1
Heavy Equipment operator	1	0	1
Retail Clerk	1	0	1
Barber	1	0	1
Other	1	2	3
Total	20	11	31
<u>Wife</u>			
Teacher	2	3	5
Nurse	2	3	5
Typist	5	2	7
Hairdresser	1	2	3
Cook	2	0	2
Telephone Operator	1	0	1
Vocational Home Ec.	0	1	1
Completed High School	1	0	1
Total	14	11	25

special training that might benefit them in seeking non-farm work increased slightly by the time of the interviews in 1966. An additional 10 percent of the respondents and seven percent of the wives had taken some type of training since leaving the farm. Consequently, by the time most of the migrants had been off the farm for several years, about 34 percent of the males and 30 percent of the females had taken some type of training. This training was slightly more prevalent among the Red Deer

migrants than those from Bonnyville, particularly with respect to the wives of the respondents.

Off-Farm Employment Experience

Literature on off-farm mobility seems to indicate that non-farm work experience may be even more helpful in finding permanent non-farm employment than formal education and training. Both Baumgartner and Perkins found the lack of non-farm job experience an impediment to migration.¹ Evidence in the Bonnyville area suggested that those individuals with non-farm jobs were less inhibited about migration than those without experience.² Farmers without non-farm work experience lack immediate qualifications to offer in the non-farm labor market. Also important is the fact that these farmers are generally less confident of their ability to support their families in non-farm employment because of their low earning power expectations. Finally, they usually lack employment contacts and effective job-hunting techniques.³

The results of this study bear out these expectations. More than one-half of the migrants had worked at non-farm jobs before leaving the farm. A larger proportion (61 percent) of the migrants from the Bonnyville area as compared to those from the Red Deer area (45 percent) had non-farm jobs during the five years prior to leaving the farm. Both of these proportions were higher than for the non-migrant farm operator

¹H. W. Baumgartner, "Potential Mobility in Agriculture: Some Reasons for the Existence of a Labor-Transfer Problem", Journal of Farm Economics, XLVII (1965), pp. 74-82. Brian Perkins, "Labor Mobility Between the Farm and Non-Farm Sector" (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Michigan State University, 1964).

²Buckmire, op. cit., p. 67.

³Abramson, op. cit., p. 50.

group in the two areas. In 1964 a survey revealed that only 36 percent of the farmers in the Bonnyville area and 29 percent in the Red Deer area were engaged in off-farm employment during that year. Although the present survey considered off-farm employment during any of the five years prior to leaving the farm, nearly all of the migrants who had worked at off-farm work had done so during the last year on the farm.

The wives of the migrants had also been engaged in off-farm work before leaving the farm. Fourteen percent of them had worked off the farm during the five years prior to leaving. Four out of five of these wives had worked for at least three years and about two thirds of them had worked off the farm on a full-time basis.

About one in every five of the former farmers who had had some off-farm employment had worked full time in non-farm occupations before leaving the farm. The others were quite evenly distributed between part-time and seasonal work. While the off-farm work undertaken by these men was usually low paying, it was a relatively stable income compared to the inadequate and unstable farm income.

Two thirds of the migrants who had held full time off-farm jobs operated farms with less than \$25,000 investment and with gross sales valued at less than \$3,750 per year. In each of these cases the returns from off-farm work exceeded the value of gross sales from the farm. Although the other third of the migrants who had worked full time in non-farm work operated farming units with at least \$25,000 worth of investment and sales valued between \$4,800 and \$6,000, it appeared that their investment had not been organized or managed to yield an adequate net farm income. As a result, the operators had to seek off-farm work to supplement this farm income.

Community Participation

Social scientists believe that the person actively taking part in his community is less likely to migrate than one uninterested in community undertakings and community life.¹ Involvement in community activities tends to be associated with a degree of satisfaction with one's status in the social environment. In turn, satisfaction leads to strong feelings of community identification making it difficult to leave.

The method for measuring community participation involves assigning a certain number of points for membership and activity in community organizations.² To obtain a total participation score for each former farm family the points assigned to each activity category in all organizations in which family members took part were summed.

No information on community participation levels of non-migrant farmers in the Red Deer area was available. However, comparing scores for non-migrants from the Bonnyville district with migrant scores indicates only a slight tendency for those with little community activity participation to move out more frequently than those with greater community involvement. There were 58 percent of non-migrants in the low participation category; 66 percent of the migrants were in this range.

¹R. D. Geschwind and V. W. Ruttan, Job Mobility and Migration: In A Low Income Rural Community, Agricultural Experimental Station, Research Bul. #730 (Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University, September, 1961).

²Point scores were assigned as follows:

<u>Membership</u>		<u>Attendance or Participation</u>	
Member only	1	Seldom	1
Committee Member	2	Occasional	2
Officer	3	Regular	3

From this scale community participation scores ranged from 0 to 35. A score of 11 or less was considered low; scores between 12 and 23, medium; and 24 and over, as high participation.

Although those who move were often average in community participation, those who moved the furthest tended to have been least involved in community organizations (Table 8). Of those who moved less than 50 miles from their farm, 54 percent were in the low participation category, whereas 81 percent of those moving more than 50 miles were in this category. Similarly, the median participation score for those moving less than 50 miles was 11 compared with only 6 for those who had migrated more than 50 miles.

Type of Farming

Mixed farming was the most common operation in which migrants engaged before leaving the farm. For over three quarters of the respondents their farm income was dependent on a variety of farm products (Table 9). About 13 percent had derived their farm income almost entirely from crop production, usually coarse grain. One in ten had specialized in either dairying or livestock production.

While a slightly larger proportion (81 percent) of the Bonnyville migrants were mixed farmers than those from Red Deer (71 percent), the Bonnyville group also showed a higher proportion specializing in crop production--15 percent compared to 10 percent in Red Deer. As a result, a larger proportion of the Red Deer migrants (6 percent) had been in livestock production than those from Bonnyville (3 percent). Moreover, almost 13 percent of those from Red Deer had left dairy farms; there were no such cases in the Bonnyville group.

Tenancy Status

Nearly all of the literature on off-farm mobility indicates that tenants have a tendency to move out of farming at a greater rate than

Table 8

DISTANCE MOVED AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SCORES
OF MIGRANTS BEFORE LEAVING THE FARM

Participation Score Class	<u>Total Migrants</u>	<u>Those Moving</u>	
		Less than 50 miles	50 miles or more
High 24 - 35	10	11	6
Medium 12 - 23	31	35	13
Low 0 - 11	70	54	81
Total	100	100	100
Number	90	74	16
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	34	32	34
Mean	11.5	12.2	8.1
Median	10	11	6

Table 9

TYPE OF FARMING OPERATION AS REPORTED BY THE MIGRANTS

Type of Farm	Bonnyville	Red Deer	Total	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Crop production	15	10	12	13
Livestock production	4	6	4	5
Dairy production	0	13	4	5
Mixed production	81	71	70	77
Total	100	100	100	100

either owners or part-owners. Abramson's study of former farmers in Saskatchewan, is one of the very few studies revealing contrary findings --a higher degree of total ownership in the former farmer group than among all farmers in the Province.

According to the 1961 Census about two thirds of the farmers in both the Bonnyville and Red Deer areas were owner operators, one quarter were part owners, and about six percent were tenant farmers (Table 10). An analysis of the former tenancy status of the migrants revealed that the proportions of these former farmers in the various classes did not differ very much from that of non-migrants. However, in looking at each area separately, it was found that there were proportionately fewer owner operators in the Bonnyville group of migrants (58 percent) than in the Red Deer group (74 percent). Correspondingly, there were almost twice as many part owners from Bonnyville (37 percent) as there were from Red Deer (20 percent). The approximate five percent of the migrants who had been tenants corresponded closely with the proportion of tenant farms in the respective areas as of 1961.

Thus off-farm migration tended to be selective with respect to tenancy status of operators within each area. In the low agricultural income area of Bonnyville the owner operator was relatively less mobile than the part owner and tenant farmer. In the higher income area of Red Deer the owner operator showed the highest rate of mobility with the part-owner being least mobile. These facts reflect the large proportion of people leaving farming in the Red Deer area for reasons of advancing age and health problems. This large group represents many years in agriculture and a high degree of ownership in the farming enterprise. A strong demand for land in the area has also helped facilitate the

Table 10

FARM TENANCY STATUS OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Tenancy Status	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants ^a	Migrants	Non-Migrants ^a	Migrants	
	percent		percent		number	percent
Owner	58	67	74	67	57	63
Part owner	37	28	20	25	28	31
Tenant	5	5	6	7	5	6
Manager	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	90	100

^aCanada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, Bulletin 5.3 - 3, Table 13 (Ottawa, 1961).

movement of farm owners out of the industry.

Size of Farms

Output and income are often directly related to the size of farm or business. A measure of size which can determine the potential capacity of a farm is the number of acres per farm operator. Limited land resources are a definite obstacle for some farmers in trying to maintain a profitable operation. With the usual organization of land and capital, smaller than average tracts of land generally do not yield sufficient volume to meet expenses and leave adequate income for family living. Many of the farm operators who are selling out have farms smaller than other farms in the area.

A review of the study data shows that these migrants generally operated farms that were considerably smaller than what is currently considered a viable unit. In 1964 the average farm consisted of 406 acres in the Bonnyville area and 461 acres in the Red Deer area. The

average total acreage operated by the migrants from both of these areas was 371 acres, about 15 percent smaller than the remaining farms. Although there were several relatively large farms operated by the migrants from Bonnyville, there was a higher proportion of the quarter section size units than in the Red Deer group (Table 11). Only 25 percent of those from Red Deer were less than 320 acres, whereas 40 percent from Bonnyville were in this class.

Amount of improved or cultivated land operated is even a better measure of the productive size of a farm than total acreage operated. In this case most migrants farmed fewer improved acres than did the average farmer (Table 12). The average Bonnyville migrant had 201 improved acres as compared with 255 acres for the farmers of the region in 1964. The corresponding acreages for Red Deer were 275 and 357 acres, respectively. Almost one quarter of the Bonnyville migrants had less than 100 acres improved on their farms. According to the 1964 survey of the area only 10 percent of the farms fell into this class.

The small amount of improved land operated by the migrants can also be seen in the proportion of total improved land to total land operated in aggregate. For the Bonnyville migrant group this proportion was 56 percent compared to 63 percent for the non-migrants of the area in 1964. In Red Deer the proportion of total improved acreage to total acreage operated was 74 percent for the migrants and 77 percent for the non-migrant group.

No information was gathered from the former farmers on how their improved land was used. However, the survey in 1964 revealed that about 19 percent of the improved farmland of the Bonnyville area was in fallow, almost twice as much as that in Red Deer. Red Deer farmers made

Table 11

TOTAL ACRES FARMED BY MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Total Acres	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	
	percent		percent		number	percent
0 - 159	12	5	6	1	9	10
160 - 319	29	22	20	28	23	25
320 - 479	25	38	42	30	28	31
480 - 639	19	21	23	18	18	20
640 - 799	8	9	6	10	7	8
800 and over	7	5	3	13	5	6
Total	100	100	100	100	90	100
Number	59	131	31	135	90	
Minimum	120	132	147	158	120	
Maximum	1,120	960	800	1,560	1,120	
Mean	371	406	371	461	371	
Median	320		320		320	

much greater use of grass and legume field crops in rotation with the regular grains. In this way a cash crop was produced each year on the land. In the Bonnyville area, where off-farm migration for economic reasons has been much greater, the farmers continued to maintain a relatively high proportion of fallow land. This was partly due to the failure of the farmers to adopt improved crop rotation practices on their less fertile soil where such methods are most necessary.

Capital Investment

Previous research on off-farm mobility has shown that the amount of capital invested in the farm is an important variable in mobility decisions. In general the greater the amount of capital invested in the

Table 12

TOTAL IMPROVED ACRES FARMED BY MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Total Improved Acres	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	
	percent		percent		number	percent
0 - 99	24	10	3	4	15	17
100 - 199	36	23	32	22	31	35
200 - 299	14	35	26	22	16	18
300 - 399	16	19	23	16	16	18
400 - 499	3	6	7	12	4	5
500 - 599	5	5	0	9	3	3
600 - 699	0	1	6	4	2	2
700 - 799	0	1	3	4	1	1
800 and over	2	0	0	7	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	89	100
Number	58	131	31	135	89	
Minimum	10	0	90	45	10	
Maximum	800	772	750	1,080	790	
Mean	201	255	275	357	227	
Median	160		240		160	

business, the greater is the restriction on job mobility. The capital invested in the farm business determines to no small measure the amount of income that is to be realized as a return to capital and labor. This, of course, relates it to the level of living the farm family can expect. In addition, higher levels of investment are usually associated with a greater sense of security in the business.

The total investment in the farming unit is a function of several factors: the initial amount of capital available when starting to farm,

type of farming, utilization of resources, levels of return over a number of years, and the managerial ability of the operator. Under relatively favorable conditions a farmer can usually accumulate increasing amounts of capital over the years in the form of more assets and higher equity. It is expected, however, that many of the operators who are leaving farming, especially those leaving because of economic difficulties, have not worked under the necessary favorable conditions and have not been able to accumulate the amounts of capital required for a viable farming unit.

The capital value of the farms of the former farmers at the time they quit farming was based on the migrant's assessment of the market value of his investment in land and buildings, machinery and equipment, and livestock and poultry. Two thirds of these farms had a capital value of less than \$24,950 (Table 13). Of the migrants from Bonnyville, 75 percent had operated farms with a capital value of less than \$24,950 as compared with 50 percent of the Red Deer migrants. Even more revealing is the fact that almost one-quarter of the Bonnyville sample had operated units capitalized at less than \$4,450 while there were none from the Red Deer area in this category. These figures reflect the low-income problem and the relatively large proportion of farmers leaving because of economic problems in the Bonnyville area.

About 57 percent of the migrants from each area had outstanding liabilities against their investment at the time they left the farm. This was much lower than the 82 percent of the farms from Bonnyville and 75 percent of those from Red Deer in 1965 that were in this situation. The amounts outstanding varied from \$250 to \$40,000 for the migrants, the average being \$5,000 (Table 14). Fifty percent of them had less than

Table 13

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN FARMS OF MIGRANTS AT TIME
OF LEAVING AND NON-MIGRANTS

Investment	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	
	percent		percent		number	percent
Under \$10,000	42	21	10	0	27	31
10,000 - 19,999	24	22	13	2	18	21
20,000 - 24,950	9	18	27	8	13	15
24,951 - 29,999	9	14	3	4	6	7
30,000 - 39,999	7	16	10	10	7	8
40,000 - 79,999	7	17	30	39	13	15
80,000 - 99,999	2	1	0	13	1	1
100,000 and over	0	0	7	24	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	87	100
Number	57	131	30	135	87	
Minimum	1,400	3,460	6,500	14,360	1,400	
Maximum	82,200	84,650	133,500	239,100	133,500	
Mean	16,975	26,815	38,105	77,102	24,261	
Median	12,000		25,960		17,500	

\$3,000 of outstanding loans.

As a result of the relatively small proportion of the migrants having any outstanding loans and the small size of the loans that were outstanding, these former farmers held rather high over-all equity in their farms. Only 16 percent had less than 75 percent equity in their farms (Table 15). The tendency toward higher equity in the Red Deer group reflects the greater number of years in farming of those migrants. Moreover, with the sale of the farming assets, the general paucity of

Table 14

AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING LOANS AT TIME OF LEAVING THE FARM
AS REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Amount of Debt	Bonnyville	Red Deer	Total	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Less than \$500	6	0	2	4
\$500 - 999	12	16	7	14
1,000 - 1,999	21	17	10	19
2,000 - 2,999	9	11	5	10
3,000 - 4,999	25	17	11	21
5,000 - 9,999	15	17	8	16
10,000 - 19,000	12	11	6	12
20,000 and over	0	11	2	4
Total	100	100	51	100
Number	33	18	51	
Minimum	250	500	250	
Maximum	18,000	40,000	40,000	
Mean	4,117	6,761	5,050	
Median	3,000	3,250	3,000	

the outstanding loans enabled most of the migrants to leave farming with virtually no debts and usually enough money to acquire a house in town.

The average investment per migrant was nearly one half of that of farmers still farming in the respective areas in 1965. The average value for the Bonnyville migrants was \$16,975 compared to \$27,267 for the non-migrants of the area. The migrant average for Red Deer was \$38,105 as compared to \$75,692 for the non-migrants. These figures are not strictly comparable due to the fact that the migrant values represent years from 1951 to 1966, whereas the non-migrant values represent 1965.

Table 15

PERCENTAGE EQUITY IN THE FARM BUSINESS OF THE MIGRANTS
BEFORE LEAVING THE FARM

Percentage equity	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Less than 50	8	3	6	7
50 - 59	2	0	1	1
60 - 69	5	6	5	6
70 - 74	2	3	2	2
75 - 79	5	0	3	3
80 - 84	12	13	11	12
85 - 89	12	7	9	10
90 - 94	8	16	10	11
95 - 99	2	10	4	5
100	44	42	39	43
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	90	100
Number	59	31	90	
Minimum	29	49	29	
Maximum	100	100	100	
Mean	86	91	88	
Median	92	95	93	

During this time the overall average increased due to increased mechanization and the appreciation of land values. But these statistics do indicate that the people who leave farming tend to have smaller total capital investment in their farms than those who remain. Moreover, many of the migrants realized the importance of capital in an economic farming unit. Fifty percent of the Red Deer group stating that their farms returned inadequate incomes attributed the inadequacy to under capitalization.

Investment in land and buildings constituted the largest proportion of the total investment of these former farmers, 57 percent in Bonnyville and 62 percent in Red Deer, which corresponds closely to the relative proportions for non-migrants in those areas. Thirty-nine percent of the Bonnyville migrants' farms had less than \$5,000 invested in land and buildings compared with only seven percent for Red Deer. The average investment in land and buildings in the Bonnyville group was \$9,865. In the Red Deer group it was \$23,519. About two thirds of this investment was in land for both areas. A large proportion of the farm buildings, especially for the Bonnyville group, were those of the original homestead and in a state of disrepair at the time of leaving the farm. One half of those from Bonnyville had an investment in buildings of less than \$2,000 and the same proportion from Red Deer had an investment of less than \$5,000.

Another 27 percent of the average total investment of the Bonnyville migrants and 23 percent for the Red Deer migrants was in machinery and equipment. These proportions also compare closely to those of the non-migrants in each area, even though the absolute averages were about one-third lower than for the non-migrants. The average investment in machinery and equipment for the Bonnyville group was \$4,813, it was \$8,936 for the Red Deer group.

The other major item considered under total investment was investment in livestock and poultry. This averaged \$3,108, or 17 percent of total investment for the migrants from Bonnyville and \$6,220, or 15 percent for those from Red Deer. The investment in livestock and poultry, especially in the Bonnyville group where this variable is strongly

correlated with net farm income,¹ appeared to be much too low to help provide sufficient farm incomes. In many cases this small livestock investment was spread over numerous small classes of animals and poultry. This lack of emphasis on a livestock farm enterprise indicated that too many of these farms were based mainly on growing grain.

Farm Income

The goal of economic betterment is probably the most important consideration prompting farmers as well as non-farmers to change occupations. Typically returns to labor in agriculture have been lower than in other industries. For some farm people in particular regions, incomes have been and continue to be considerably below those in non-farm occupations. It is this income differential and the desire for a greater or more equitable share in the prosperity of society that prompts many farmers to migrate to non-farm jobs.

One of the ways to examine economic conditions of farm families is to consider gross returns from the sale of farm products. Although this is actually a measure of the economic activity or size of farm business, it is also closely related to net farm income in most cases. In this way it provides a single criterion for assessing the economic achievement of farm families. Likewise, it has a significant influence on family attitudes towards migration because it helps to determine the amount of satisfaction derived from farming. This, in turn, influences the extent to which they are content to remain in farming or desire to

¹Neil M. Campbell, A Case Study in Economic Development: The Bonnyville and Red Deer Farming Communities, Department of Agricultural Economics Special Report No. 3 (Edmonton: The University of Alberta, August 1966), pp. 42-45.

leave farming for other occupations.

Difficulties were encountered in attempting to measure the economic levels of the migrants prior to leaving the farm. For example, how does one evaluate the cash value of non-cash income on the farm. It is a fact that some farm families grow some of the food which they consume instead of purchasing it. Yet the farm family has been drawn into the commercial world. If the family wants a varied and attractive diet, it must purchase much of its food. In fact, the farm family today pays as much as others for household durables, automobiles, education, medical care, insurance, and vacations. To say that costs of living are much lower on the farm is really an observation that the level of living is much lower on the farm.

Much of the information reported was also subject to memory errors due to the time lapse since leaving the farm and the time of the interview. Many of the respondents had little formal education and kept few records on which to estimate either gross, or much less, net cash income. Estimates also varied according to the wide year-to-year fluctuations in cash returns depending on crop and price conditions. To lessen this difficulty, the respondents were asked to estimate a yearly average value for the last three years before leaving the farm.

The data was difficult to interpret because of the varying time periods to which they referred. In an attempt to overcome this difficulty each of the gross farm income values reported was adjusted to its 1966 equivalent level according to the index of farm prices for agricultural products. This had the overall effect of raising the reported values an average of about 18 percent. In this way the gross farm income was measured by the adjusted total value of all livestock products and grain

sold from the farm.

According to the information collected in this study, many of the migrants appeared to be operating submarginal farms with respect to total output by current ARDA standards.¹ About one half of the migrants had farms that produced less than \$3,750 of gross sales per year as an average over the last three years on the farm (Table 16). Moreover, 29 percent of the farms fell into the non-commercial farm category of gross sales less than \$2,500. Only a minority of 16 percent reported gross sales as being at least \$10,000, an amount that might be expected to provide a farm family with a reasonable net income and a comfortable level of living. The gross income from the sale of farm products ranged from \$340 to a maximum of \$35,660 per year. The inclusion of eight migrants reporting gross sales greater than \$15,000 raised the average value to \$5,941. As would be expected, none of these larger producers had left farming for economic reasons.

Generally the migrants from the Bonnyville area reported having gross sales of less than one half the amount reported by those from Red Deer. The Bonnyville group average was \$4,075 while that of Red Deer was \$9,674. The median values were much lower; \$2,910 for the Bonnyville group and \$7,272 for those from Red Deer. Correspondingly, the proportion of migrants from the Bonnyville district who reported sales under \$3,750 was much higher than that of Red Deer group, 59 percent as compared to 26 percent. On the other hand, the proportion of Red Deer migrants with

¹The 1965-70 Federal-Provincial Rural Development Agreement defines a submarginal farm as one having a total capital value of less than \$25,000 and annual sales of farm products of less than \$3,750.

Table 16

GROSS FARM INCOME OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Gross Farm Income	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants ^a	Migrants	Non-Migrants ^a	Migrants	Non-Migrants
	percent		percent		number	percent
Less than \$1,200	17	13	0	0	9	11
1,200 - 2,499	22	20	7	5	14	18
2,500 - 3,749	20	24	19	7	16	20
3,750 - 4,999	11	15	7	10	8	10
5,000 - 9,000	24	23	26	35	20	25
10,000 - 14,999	2	2	19	17	6	7
15,000 - 24,999	4	2	19	10	7	8
25,000 and over	0	1	3	16	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	81	100
Number	54		27		81	
Minimum	340	0	1,680	1,210	340	
Maximum	16,600	28,454	35,660	43,330	35,660	
Mean	4,075	4,106	9,674	11,697	5,941	
Median	2,910		7,272		3,880	

^aGross farm income of migrants adjusted to 1966 equivalent and that of the non-migrants based on 1964 findings.

sales in excess of \$10,000 was much larger (40 percent) than those from Bonnyville (5.5 percent). This gives some indication of why a much higher proportion of former farmers left for economic and financial difficulties in Bonnyville than in Red Deer.

This distribution and average of the gross sales per farm for the Bonnyville migrants corresponded very closely to that of the non-migrants in 1964. But the Red Deer migrant average was lower by \$2,000

or 17 percent, and there was more than twice the proportion of farms in the less than \$3,750 range, than the non-migrant group of the area. These findings tend to support the generalization that transfer of labor from one occupation to another is essentially a function of economic incentives. That is, low-income farm families are the most likely to move out of agriculture. The findings also support the conclusions of Baumgartner and Fliegel;¹ while off-farm mobility depends on economic aspirations, under certain conditions (in this case below some income level) other factors may influence or obscure this relationship between economic motivation and mobility. In other words, in the Bonnyville area, where 94 percent of the farms have gross sales of less than \$10,000, potential off-farm mobility in terms of economic aspirations is so great that no noticeable difference between the incomes of migrants and non-migrants can be observed.

Those who left farming in the Red Deer area to improve their economic situation were not only relatively few in number but also had value of gross sales much lower than the area average. However, it is in these same low output categories that the majority of the farms in the low-income area are found. For this reason the farms from which the migrants leave in a low-income region are not very different, in terms of size of output, than most of the farming units in that area. In such regions other variables obscure the economic motivation and act as impediments to the realization of the very high potential mobility that

¹H. W. Baumgartner, "Potential Mobility in Agriculture: Some Reasons for the Existence of a Labor-Transfer Problem," Journal of Farm Economics, XLVII (1965), 74-82. F. C. Fliegel, "Aspirations of Low-Income Farmers and Their Performance and Potential for Change," Rural Sociology, XXIV (1959), 205-214.

exists. This conclusion is supported by the results of an earlier study which found that 44 percent of the Bonnyville farm families in 1965 would be willing to leave farming if they were given alternative opportunities.¹

Net Farm Income

Data on farm expenses were not available; therefore it was not possible to determine accurately the net farm incomes of the migrants before leaving the farm. Such a measure would provide a better indication of the money available to the family from the farming enterprise for household consumption and re-investment in the farm business than does gross farm income.

From a study of farmers in the two respective areas under consideration in 1964 it was found that total farm expenses accounted for a rather constant proportion of the gross farm sales.² This proportion ranged from 64.4 percent to 69.9 percent for the Bonnyville farms and from approximately 57.7 percent to 63.4 percent for the Red Deer farms. These figures indicated that on the average, net farm income on Bonnyville farms was about 32 percent of gross farm sales and about 39 percent on Red Deer farms. Using these percentages as a guide, an estimated net farm income was calculated for the migrants' farms.

These calculations indicated that three quarters of the migrants had earned estimated net farm incomes of less than \$2,000 (Table 17). In the Bonnyville group this proportion was 90 percent as compared to only 67 percent of the non-migrant farmers in 1964. Forty-four percent of the

¹Buckmire, op. cit., p. 97.

²Elmer C. Allen, Factors Affecting Economic Growth in the Bonnyville Region, (unpublished M.Sc. thesis of the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Alberta, August, 1966), p. 132.

Table 17

ESTIMATED NET FARM INCOME OF MIGRANTS

Estimated net Farm Income	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Less than \$500	30	0	16	20
\$500 - 999	30	15	20	25
1,000 - 1,499	13	11	10	12
1,500 - 1,999	19	19	15	19
2,000 - 2,999	5	8	5	6
3,000 - 3,999	2	22	7	9
4,000 - 4,999	1	7	3	4
5,000 - 5,999	0	4	1	1
6,000 - 6,999	0	7	2	2
7,000 and over	0	7	2	2
Total	100	100	81	100
Number	54	27	81	
Minimum	109	585	109	
Maximum	4,800	11,700	11,700	
Mean	1,057	3,262	1,792	
Median	816	2,535	1,120	

Red Deer migrants compared to only 25 percent of the non-migrants were in this similar low net farm income position. The Red Deer migrants appeared to earn about three times the net earnings of those from Bonnyville, which parallels a similar proportion of non-migrants in the two areas.

It must be remembered that these net farm earnings are only estimates. Moreover, they refer to various time periods between 1951

and 1966 during which the general price changes in operating and living factors have not paralleled those of agricultural prices. These figures do help illustrate the low farm income situation in which many of the former farmers were living.

The Bonnyville group generally practiced a more subsistence type of agricultural production. In their own value terms, 83 percent of these former farmers and 61 percent of those from Red Deer stated that their farms did not return, on the average, an income sufficient to support their families adequately. Considering both groups together, only about one quarter of the former farmers thought that their farm income was sufficient while three quarters felt that it was not.

The group from Red Deer attributed this lack of farm income mainly to insufficiencies in capital, land, or labor resources on their farms, with under capitalization mentioned in about 50 percent of the reasons. Another portion of the group blamed unfavorable weather conditions--mainly hail. (Several of these migrants had been hailed out several years in succession.)

On the other hand, while about one quarter of the migrants from Bonnyville attributed their inadequate farm incomes to under capitalization; almost one half of them referred to the cost-price squeeze. Although they also felt that they might have been under capitalized, they felt that low agricultural prices and high factor costs, particularly machinery costs, contributed to low returns on investment and did not justify increasing investment in their farming operation. Another 15 percent reported that their low farm incomes were caused by poor crops resulting from a combination of unfavorable weather and poor soil conditions. It is also interesting to note that only two of the former

farmers attributed their low farm incomes to inadequacies in management.

Total Farm Family Income

Total farm family income represents all the income available to a farm family for consumption and saving because it includes both net farm earnings and off-farm family earnings such as profits from non-farm business, family allowance, pensions, and income from miscellaneous sources. Thus, this measure provides a useful criterion for assessing the farm family's socio-economic position.

Off-farm income was more important to the former farmer before leaving farming than to non-migrant farmers. The Bonnyville migrants had earned 54 percent of their estimated farm family income from off-farm sources as compared with 41 percent for the non-migrants of the area in 1964. The proportion for the Red Deer migrants was 35 percent as to only 19 percent for the non-migrants.

As might be expected, family allowance payments were the more frequently occurring source of non-farm income. Seventy-two percent of the respondents reported receiving these payments that ranged from \$72 to \$960 per year; the average being \$270. Family allowance payments accounted for 13 percent of total family income for the Bonnyville migrants and only seven percent for the migrants from Red Deer.

Off-farm employment was the most important source of non-farm income for a large portion of the migrants. About 60 percent of the Bonnyville migrants and 45 percent of those from the Red Deer area reported that such earnings contributed to their net family income. The median amount earned was \$1,500. Most of those working part-time or seasonally off the farm earned between \$500 and \$750 per year; those on

permanent off-farm jobs generally earned from \$1,500 to \$3,000 per year. On the average off-farm work accounted for 57 percent of the total family income for the Bonnyville group and 45 percent for the Red Deer group.

Although the goal of agricultural subsidies has been to assist farmers during years of exceptionally low farm incomes due to natural disasters and low prices, it is evident that in many cases these subsidies become a rather significant portion of total income rather than a supplement to farm income. Such subsidies were more prevalent in the Bonnyville group than in the Red Deer group. Not only did proportionately more of the Bonnyville migrants (19 percent) receive agricultural subsidies of various kinds and amounts during the three years prior to leaving the farm than did those from Red Deer (10 percent), but the usual size of the subsidy was also larger. The median amount received by the Bonnyville migrants was \$200 as compared with \$100 for the Red Deer counterparts. While subsidies contributed to only four percent of total family income in the Red Deer group, it accounted for 11 percent for the Bonnyville group.

Less than seven percent of the respondents reported any other forms of income while on the farm. Most of these reported sources were in the form of pensions, oil lease payments, and special crops like the sale of berries. The amounts received ranged from \$150 to \$575 per year. A former farmer from the Red Deer area had also received about \$2,000 per year from bonds and other non-farm investments.

Level of Living

Social and psychological as well as material considerations interplay in determining the amount of satisfaction farm families derive from their occupation and from living on the farm. An alternative

measure of economic conditions and an indicator of the success of farm families may be obtained through the level of living index. This index takes into consideration the possession of certain cultural goods, the choice of which is determined both by the individual family and also by the society. It has the advantage of reflecting the cumulative effects of past earnings and is not subject to the wide year-to-year fluctuations of net farm income or even family income. The scale has the disadvantage of measuring everyone by common cultural standards which may not allow for individual differences in preferences. Nevertheless, there are things which most everyone shares in common, particularly when basic household amenities and comforts are considered.

The index employed in comparing the migrants with the non-migrants included the condition of the dwelling, the number of rooms in the dwelling, possession of electricity, telephone, running water, indoor bath, hot water heater, central heating, radio, television, refrigerator, deep freeze, power washer, magazine subscription, newspapers, and books. Points were allotted for these items so that the range of possible scores was from zero to 21. In using this index for comparison purposes it must be remembered that the study covered migrants over the 15-year period, 1951-1966, while the non-migrant index distribution was determined in 1964. During the early 1950's all rural communities did not enjoy the same public services such as electricity and telephones. The absence of such public services was much greater in the Bonnyville area than in the Red Deer district. However, the comparison of their respective level of living scores does provide an indication of the relative long term economic position of the groups.

The distribution of the level of living scores shows that the

farm families in the Red Deer area generally had a higher level of living than their Bonnyville counterparts. The average score for Red Deer farmers was 16 compared to 12 for Bonnyville (Table 18). Even within the two areas, the families who left the farm had a much lower level of living than those who remained. The average former farmer score for Red Deer was 13 compared to 9 for Bonnyville.

The reason for the differences in the level of living of these groups becomes more apparent when various specific items of the level of living index are considered. The size and condition of the family dwelling may be a reflection of socio-economic circumstances in itself. As Abramson discovered, "Judging by the characteristics of their housing on the farm, many of the respondents in this study had lived in circumstances of material deprivation compared to the norm of the larger society."¹ Many of the farm dwellings particularly in the Bonnyville area were constructed during the early years of settlement. Some were constructed of logs with only two or three rooms and equipped with very few conveniences. Moreover, the migrant families themselves felt the inadequacy of their dwellings. When asked to assess the conditions of their own homes using their own values, two thirds reported them as being only poor or fair. Of course a number of the dwellings that were constructed at later dates were comparable to modern urban dwellings. A third of the migrants thought that they had lived in dwellings of good or excellent condition.

Table 19 shows a comparison of the proportion of Red Deer migrants and Bonnyville migrants and non-migrants that possessed various

¹Abramson, op. cit., p. 22.

Table 18

FARM LEVEL OF LIVING INDEX OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Level of living Index	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	
	percent		percent		number	percent
0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1 - 3	2	1	0	0	1	1
4 - 7	44	7	3	5	27	30
8 - 11	32	36	42	7	32	35
12 - 15	15	41	23	21	16	18
16 - 18	5	14	10	34	6	7
19 - 21	2	0	22	33	8	9
Total	100	100	100	100	90	100
Number	59	131	31	135		
Minimum	3	0	5	5		
Maximum	19	18	21	20		
Mean	9	12	13	20		
Median	7		15			

level of living items. In each of the eleven items listed, the migrants showed a much lower degree of possession than did those who remained on the farm in the area. Similarly, the Bonnyville migrants had a lower proportion of possession of each item than the Red Deer migrants. The overall picture suggested by these facts is one of a substandard living environment, particularly in the low-income area.

Table 19

POSSESSION OF LEVEL OF LIVING ITEMS BY MIGRANTS
AND NON-MIGRANTS OF BONNYVILLE

Item	<u>Bonnyville</u>		<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	number	Migrants
	percent		percent	number	percent
Electricity	39	78	90	52	58
Telephone	14	20	68	30	33
Running water	12	32	36	18	20
Indoor bath	10	22	29	15	17
Hot-water heater	9	23	36	16	18
Central heating	15	47	45	23	26
Television	24	58	52	30	33
Refrigerator	36	70	77	45	50
Deep freeze	27	69	42	30	33
Power washer	64	90	94	68	76
Books - 10 or more	46	69	61	46	51

CHAPTER III

THE DECISION TO LEAVE FARMING

Leaving farming involves leaving a familiar environment and type of life to face a future with many unknown experiences. The new life could lead to more pleasant living conditions, greater financial rewards, and less physical burden; but the uncertainties associated with the change place most farmers in a cautious mood. Realizing the important implications of making such a move, it is expected that rational, choosing farm families carefully consider the alternatives which they perceive to be open to them before they finally decide to leave the farm for non-farm residence and employment.

The factors involved in the decision-making process are often extremely complex and at times even impossible to isolate. But as Johnson has suggested, a study of mobility must include a reasonable explanation of the important motivating factors, both personal and economic.¹

While some types of migration are largely a matter of tradition and wanderlust, most stem from irrational impulses arising out of a disturbing situation. The study of farm to non-farm migration in the United States and Canada has usually assumed that the movement has been of a free

¹D. Gale Johnson, "Mobility as a Field of Economic Research," Southern Economic Journal, XV (Oct. 1948), 152.

type.¹ Individuals have moved because they aspire to something better than the farm offers them. On the other hand, a move caused by a lease termination or critical health problems certainly has elements of forced or impelled migration. Nevertheless, it is probably not unreasonable to assume that the movement is a result of the rational choice of individuals or groups.

Under conditions in which freedom of choice may be exercised, migration can be viewed as a decision-making process. This process is composed of three major elements; satisfactions, costs, and aspirations. Beegle states that:²

In this decision-making process satisfactions with life in the community of residence are weighed against the social costs of moving to another area. This evaluation process takes place in relation to the level of aspirations derived from the value orientation, range of knowledge, and experience of groups and individuals. Satisfaction, the first dimension mentioned, is regarded as cohesiveness resulting from identification with groups and structures. Social costs, the second dimension, is regarded as rootlessness, or perceptions of rootlessness, attending migration. Finally, aspiration is considered the desired future condition or style of life sought. Each of the three dimensions is perceived to range from low to high, and each is viewed as interacting with the others.

Similarly the process is expanded to include economic and other personal, as well as social, considerations. If aspirations are fulfilled by current circumstances, they reinforce existing satisfactions and diminish desire for a change. Likewise, any negative image of non-farm employment

¹For a discussion of various types of migration see: W. Peterson, "A General Typology of Migration," American Sociological Review, XXIII (1958), 256-266.

²J. Allan Beegle, "Sociological Aspects of Changes in Farm Labor Force," In Labor Mobility and Population in Agriculture (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1965), p. 75.

or living that a family may have would increase the anticipated social cost of moving.

If, however, an individual is less than completely satisfied with his farming situation and becomes aware of some relative advantages of non-farm alternatives he is likely to enquire further about the advantages and disadvantages of such opportunities. Then all the pros and cons are considered in a process of evaluation. This is the main turning point in the decision-making process in which the potential migrants either become actual migrants or continue farming.

The decision-making process is essentially the collection, interpretation, and evaluation of information. Basic to the process is the individual's perception of reality, which is to a great extent a function of what one has been conditioned to perceive. This depends on such things as past experience, intelligence, state of knowledge, frame of reference, and mental mood. An individual's perception of a situation or an experience may not be valid for anyone other than himself and may even be completely erroneous with respect to reality.

Humans respond to a situation as they define that situation. But their perceptions of the situation will likely be false or distorted if they are based upon incomplete or inaccurate information. Moreover, if people believe a situation is real, it is real in its consequences. Even though the perceptions may not relate to the actual situation, they are the criteria by which their decisions are made. Thus it must be remembered that the advantages and disadvantages of the different aspects of both farm and non-farm life reported by these people were not necessarily a portrayal of the actual circumstances. Nevertheless, these are the perceptions which brought about the decision to move from the farm.

Perceptions on Moving

This study only included off-farm migrants for the Bonnyville and Red Deer areas who had quit farming during the period 1951 to mid 1966. Some migrants from each of the intervening years in this period were interviewed. This ranged from only two migrants for 1953 to nine migrants for the year 1965. The median year for all the migrants was 1959.

It was expected that a decision that could have such important and long-lasting effects upon the migrant's life and that of his family would not be made quickly and without considerable thought. While the final decision may at times appear to be spontaneous, it usually is the outcome of prolonged consideration. In this study over 60 percent of the migrants had been thinking of making the change for a year or more before actually quitting the farm (Table 20). However, due to various circumstances about 38 percent had made the decision during the year just prior to leaving. (These migrants were generally slightly younger and operated farms with larger gross sales than the average migrant.)

Attitudes Toward Farming

While the farm situation often fails to satisfy the farm family's criteria for the material aspects of a "good life", it does provide some rather unique sources of psychic satisfaction. As Abramson suggested, "Much of the decision process is concerned with the resolution of strongly conflicting feelings many farmers have concerning their farms."¹ Usually farmers have a high positive value on farming as a way-of-life. At the same time, farming as a business or occupation in a context of inadequate resources, uncertainty of production, and low

¹Abramson, op. cit., p. 60.

Table 20

LENGTH OF TIME MAKING DECISION TO LEAVE FARMING

Time	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
During the year prior to leaving	35	43	32	38
One or more years prior to leaving	65	57	58	62
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>100</u>

monetary returns is very unrewarding.

The migrants in this study were asked to discuss how they felt about farming as an occupation and as a place to live. The answers revealed that nearly all of the group had mixed feelings toward farming. Although their post-migratory evaluation of farming may have been affected by various kinds of experiences they had since migration, attractive as well as unattractive attitudes toward farming were still held by the migrants.

Ninety-three percent of the respondents reported attractive features or advantages they felt existed in farming as an occupation and place to live. However, all but one of the categories of advantages reported, as shown in Table 21, reflect the social-psychological attributes of farming. These varied from feelings of independence, serene atmosphere, and close familial and neighborhood relationships to the satisfaction of working with plants and animals.

The advantage of farming that was mentioned more than twice as often as the next most predominant feature was the feeling of independence a farmer experiences. Thirty-five percent of the advantages reported

Table 21

MAIN ADVANTAGES OF FARMING AS AN OCCUPATION AND A PLACE TO LIVE AS
REPORTED BY THE MIGRANTS

Advantages	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	Total Migrants	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Feeling of Independence	34	39	56	35
Healthy, peaceful atmosphere	16	18	27	17
Good place to raise children	19	9	25	16
Working with plants and animals	11	7	16	10
Low cost of living	9	4	11	7
Close family relationships	3	7	7	4
Challenge to express ones abilities	1	6	4	3
People more friendly	1	4	3	2
Other	6	6	9	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	158	100
Those reporting some advantages	95	90	84	93

referred to this subjective feeling of independence and freedom of choice one has on the farm. It is, however, paradoxical that so many of these former farmers also reported that the drudgery of routine farm chores, the uncertainty of weather and crop conditions, and the inability to seek higher product prices were among the disadvantages of farming.

Though they said they could take a day off whenever they liked or work as many hours as they liked, it often turned out they had not taken that day off in years and they had worked hours which would seem excessive to most non-farm workers.

The subsistence farmer has virtually a single line of action which to follow as set out by his type of farming. His behavior is largely dictated by the demands of the situation; not of other people. To a large extent the situation determines the particular repetitive, traditionally defined operation that he performs. It takes a certain amount of specialized knowledge and alertness to assess the various factors of the situation such as the weather and other natural conditions. "The need to identify the changing class of situation and the appropriate responses to it gives him a sense of constant adaptation in a survival game, making farming an interesting and challenging occupation."¹ Consequently, the challenge to express one's abilities accounted for another three percent of the reported advantages of farming.

Seventeen percent of the attributes of farming were expressed in terms of the healthy, peaceful atmosphere that exists on the farm. Some migrants felt that being able to be outdoors in the fresh air much of the time was a great asset to good health. Others mentioned the open spaces, and the quiet privacy they had experienced on the farm. Being able to work with animals, plants, and the land was an advantage of farming as reported by 16 of the respondents. Such responses reflected the feelings of these people that the farm family performs creative functions closely related to the primary sources of life.

¹Ibid., p. 27.

Seven of the migrants said that close family relationships were an advantage of farm living; 25 others specifically said that the farm was a good place to raise children. Their reasoning was that there is very little distinction between occupational roles and family roles in a farm family, and each member performs functions which are essential to the family's economic well-being. Moreover, while the children are young, there tends to be less outside interference with the influence of the parents than in urban living. As a result, the farm family becomes a relatively cohesive and interdependent social unit, and the preservation of it becomes one of the primary values of its members.

Eleven of the migrants mentioned that the cost of living was lower on the farm than in town. While this was a valid observation in the past and continues to be true to a limited extent today, at least for the subsistence type farmer, it more often reflects a lower level of living on the farm than in the rest of society. Other attractive features of farming reported by the migrants included the friendliness of farm people, the sense of security associated with owning a farm, and various esthetic values.

As well as advantages, most of the former farmers could also think of some disadvantages of farming as an occupation and a place to live. While the advantages seemed to emphasize the social-psychological aspects of farming, the disadvantages were centered around the occupational and business conditions of farming. In general, they projected the farmer's sense of dependence upon the many factors over which he has no control that affect farming. For example, over a third of the migrants stated that the uncertainty of production caused by changing weather and crop conditions was a major difficulty in farming (Table 22).

Table 22

MAIN DISADVANTAGES OF FARMING AS AN OCCUPATION AND A PLACE TO LIVE
AS REPORTED BY THE MIGRANTS

Disadvantages	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Uncertainty of production conditions	22	24	33	22
Hard working conditions	8	10	13	9
Lack of modern household conveniences	15	4	16	11
Lack of income security	8	16	16	11
Low product prices	15	8	18	12
High costs of production	11	18	20	14
Lack of educational facilities	4	10	9	6
Lack of other facilities and service	11	6	14	10
Other	6	4	8	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	147	100
Those migrants reporting some disadvantages	94	95	85	94

Furthermore, the farmer had virtually no control over the low price he received for his products and had to accept the increasing costs of production. Such uncertainties caused what 16 respondents called a lack of financial or income security in farming.

Other disadvantages of farming reflected the low level of farm

living. Almost one in five of the respondents said that living without many modern household conveniences was an unattractive feature of farming. Many of the low-income farmers were unable to afford such amenities as electricity, running water, and refrigerators, or a modern comfortable home. Another 15 percent said that other facilities and services like telephones, all-weather roads, and convenient access to medical services were not available in their district.

About one tenth of the respondents said that living on a farm limited the education facilities and programs for their children, especially at the high school level. In some cases it was a question of not having a high school or school bus within a reasonable distance of the farm home; other respondents thought the curriculum offered was not as broad as in urban centers. Some of the other disadvantages reported varied from the hard working conditions on the farm to the large amount of capital required to establish a viable farm unit.

From the evidence present in the discussion with the migrants of both advantages and disadvantages of farming as an occupation and place to live it was quite evident that even years after migration, farming has a strong attraction for many of the former farm people. The attraction was mainly in the social-psychological aspects of farming such as the independence of being ones own boss, working outdoors, and close family relationships. On the other hand, it was the unattractive occupational conditions of low and uncertain returns as well as hard working conditions that were among the most important disadvantages of farming.

Sources of Counsel

One would expect that the decision to leave farming to be important enough that many of the migrants would have sought counsel

outside the immediate family in the course of the decision-making process. However, most of the migrants in this study did not seek such assistance. These respondents relied on their own personal judgement and the views of the immediate family in making the decision. Several of the former farmers had discussed the alternatives with any of their friends and neighbours. Nine of the 14 migrants who had left the farm for health reasons had sought or at least received advice from doctors. (Table 23). Another two migrants, both from the Bonnyville area, had obtained advice from their credit advisor. Nearly all of those who sought outside advice reported that the information received was good and valuable in the decision-making process.

Reasons for Leaving

A survey of the literature on off-farm migration reveals that there are many reasons why farm people move to non-farm occupations. The factors that activate the move to non-farm work can "vary widely depending on differences in the situation, family characteristics, personalities, opportunities, and resources of the respondents."¹ In many instances the different reasons really reflect differences in the way the individuals concerned define and interpret the situation in which they find themselves.

Many students of migration believe that there are two complementary forces at work in any migration. The first of these is the expulsive forces in the existing situation, and the second is the attracting forces of alternative situations. Thus many studies have classified these forces into those of a "push" and those of a "pull" nature. The push factors include such forces as the desire to improve financial and social

¹Abramson, op. cit., p. 62.

Table 23

SOURCES OF COUNSEL SOUGHT BY THE MIGRANTS

Source	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	number	number	number
Immediate family	49	18	67
Doctor	4	5	9
Credit Advisor	2	0	2
Friends and neighbors	1	2	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	56	25	81

conditions, uncertainty concerning agricultural productivity and incomes, various costs associated with changes in agricultural production technology, and undesirable working conditions in farming. The converse forces of high non-farm incomes, good working conditions and social facilities, and the general attractiveness of urban life are pull factors encouraging migration. When unfavorable conditions prevail, the expulsive forces receive most attention; when the conditions are favorable, the attractive forces are most likely considered.

However, designations of push and pull factors are really only literally applicable during extreme depression or boom years in various sectors of the economy. "These 'push' and 'pull' factors are, in fact, essentially the supply and the demand for labor."¹ Seldom are individuals and families driven from their farms by sheer adversity or, on the other hand, attracted off solely by a pull factor. Actually the decision to

¹Bishop, op. cit., p. 4.

leave is based upon an interaction of such factors. It is in this way that the movement of individuals and groups is often due to various different reasons.

Primary Reasons

Numerous studies have been made indicating that the primary reasons for leaving agriculture are economic in nature, although aggravated by the general conditions of work and life in the country. The relative earnings of farm and non-farm labor are certainly basic incentives for migration from farming. Also evident from information supplied by the migrants in this study is that economic considerations were the most important factors in the migration decision. Sixty-four percent of the respondents reported economic or financial primary reasons for migration (Table 24). These former farmers were not making enough money to meet expenses and family needs; their returns to capital and labor were low; and many of them felt they had the ability, training, or aptitude to qualify for higher paying non-farm employment that offered a more rewarding future.

Nearly one half of these migrants who had left for economic reasons specifically reported that low and uncertain farm income necessitated their move. Another 12 percent of this group mentioned that a combination of high and rising factor costs and low and fluctuating farm product prices contributed to an unsatisfactory farm income. While many other migrants did not explicitly specify low farm income as the primary reason for migration, they did imply that this was a factor. They mentioned unfavorable weather conditions, poor soil, successive crop failures, as well as inadequate size of farms, lack of credit, and labor shortage. These were contributing factors to unsatisfactory farm incomes

Table 24

PRIMARY REASONS FOR LEAVING THE FARM

Reason	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Economic				
Low, unstable income	36	13	25	28
High factor costs	3	6	4	5
Low, fluctuating prices	3	3	3	3
Lack of capital	2	6	3	3
Insufficient land	5	6	5	6
Crop failure	17	13	14	16
Labor shortage	2	7	3	3
Personal				
Age	2	7	3	3
Health	8	29	14	16
Social-psychological				
Strenuous working conditions	7	7	6	7
Inadequate living conditions	7	0	4	4
Children had left home	3	0	2	2
Desire for better job opportunities	2	0	1	1
Unable to continue lease	3	3	3	3
Total	100	100	90	100

and the primary reason they left farming.

The second most frequently mentioned category of primary reasons was that associated with personal factors of age and health. Because this study did not include people who left farming to retire, the number of respondents that gave advancing age as a reason for leaving was small. The three migrants that did give this reason were experiencing a decline in their physical stamina and could not stand as much hard work as they formerly did on their farms. However, there were others who preferred to refer to their declining physical capacity for the work on their farms as a health problem, rather than one of advancing age. Over 15 percent of the migrants said that failing health was their main reason for leaving the farm. In most cases it was the operator who was in ill health; occasionally his wife or child's health problem was the reason for the move. Together, health and age reasons accounted for 19 percent of the primary reasons for leaving the farm.

Reasons classified as social-psychological were the main factors influencing 14 percent of the migrants to move. Many of the people in this category felt that farm working conditions were too hard. Others specifically said that they desired better living conditions and thought better job opportunities were available off the farm. Two other respondents said that their children had already left home and had no desire to eventually take over the farm.

The final category of reasons included those who were forced to leave their farm because they were unable to continue their farm lease. This group accounted for less than three percent of the migrants.

In comparing reasons for off-farm migration as given by those from the Bonnyville area and those from the Red Deer area, it is not

surprising to find that in the lower income agricultural district 68 percent of the migrants reported economic factors as compared with 55 percent of those from the Red Deer area. The difference is more marked when the proportion who specifically mentioned low and uncertain farm income as their main reason--36 percent of the Bonnyville migrants and only 13 percent of the Red Deer group.

These differences are also illustrated in the proportion reporting personal reasons for leaving the farm. This category contained only 10 percent of the Bonnyville migrants and 35 percent of those from Red Deer. Moreover, while 18 percent of the former farmers from Bonnyville left because of social-psychological reasons, only six percent from Red Deer gave the same reason.

These comparisons reflect the greater degree of dissatisfaction with farm incomes and living conditions in the Bonnyville area than in the Red Deer area. For example, three respondents from Bonnyville reported that poor roads to their farm left them isolated too frequently during adverse weather conditions. But in the Red Deer group, while economic reasons were still the most important factors for leaving, personal reasons assumed much greater importance than in the Bonnyville group.

Other Influencing Factors

The decision to leave the farm is influenced by a complex group of factors. Besides giving the one major reason that caused them to quit farming, many of the migrants were also able to list a number of other factors that had a bearing on their decision.

In looking at these other factors it was found that rising factor costs and low unstable farm incomes, or economic difficulties in general, were contributing factors for many more farmers leaving than

the 63 percent who reported this as their most important reason (Table 25). This category accounted for 57 percent of all the influencing reasons given.

Personal factors of health and age also influenced the decision of eight percent of the migrants. Social-psychological reasons were much more important as influencing factors than as prime reasons for leaving. Thirty-five percent of the migrants were influenced by such reasons. One third of these particular considerations evolved around the desire for better living conditions.

The relatively high proportion of migrants reporting various economic factors as other influencing reasons as well as major reasons for leaving the farm, particularly among the Bonnyville group, indicates the compounding effect of a declining economic situation on a farm. For instance, many stated that a low and unstable farm income was the major reason for quitting. Often the low income situation prevented the operator from acquiring appreciable amounts of capital. Consequently, these people experienced a shortage of resources, especially land and sometimes machinery and equipment. Without adequate mechanization some suffered from a shortage of labor.

More often than not these farm operations farmed poor quality soil. Coupled with adverse weather conditions, crop failures were a frequent occurrence. Under low farm income conditions such farms had few reserves on which to rely. It was in such a vicious circle of circumstances that a large portion of the former farmers had attempted to operate. As a result, it is not surprising to find so many of them reporting the many varied types of economic stress that had caused them to quit farming.

Table 25

OTHER REASONS INFLUENCING THE DECISION TO LEAVE FARMING

Reason	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Economic	61	48	47	57
Personal	9	7	7	8
Social-psychological	30	45	29	35
Tenure	0	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	83	100

Reasons for Not Leaving Sooner

In view of the fact that many migrants had been considering leaving farming for some time before they actually did, it was of interest to know why they had not left sooner. A large portion of the migrants were sincerely reluctant to leave farming. Although conditions were not as they would have liked, 28 percent of the respondents said that they had not left sooner than they did because they were "getting by" and hoped that the situation might soon improve so that they could remain on the farm (Table 26).

Those under various forms of economic or financial stress generally had insufficient land and/or capital resources to continue to farm under the existing cost-price relationships and make an adequate living. However, they remained on the farm longer than they should have, in many cases as long as they possibly could, hoping for improved price relationships. Similarly, those who faced health problems continued to

Table 26

REASONS THE MIGRANTS DID NOT LEAVE THE FARM SOONER

Reasons	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Getting by--hoped situation might improve	28	29	21	28
No alternative opportunity	32	11	18	24
Very attached to the farm	17	15	12	16
No buyer for the farm	9	19	9	12
No need to move sooner	6	15	7	10
Other	8	11	7	10
Total	100	100	74	100

farm as long as possible, hoping that their health would improve so that they would not be required to give up their chosen occupation and way of life.

About one in every four of the migrants who had moved off the farm had not done so earlier due to a lack of alternative opportunities. In some instances the former farm operator had continued farming, even after he had decided that it was in his best interest to quit, until he could find a suitable business venture to enter. Going into a self-operated non-farm business would of course enable him to retain some of the entrepreneurship associated with farming. Usually the alternative opportunity that migrants awaited was one of finding a permanent non-farm

job which would provide a sufficient income to support his family in a non-farm environment as well as meet other personal criteria of a suitable job.

Very strong personal and family attachments to the farm and to the neighborhood impeded about 16 percent of the former farmers from leaving earlier. Some of the migrants wanted to dispose all their farming assets before entering the non-farm labor force on a permanent basis. Twelve percent of migrants stated that they had not left the farm sooner because they found no effective buyers for their land. The machinery and livestock was usually sold at an auction sale on the farm. Normally this did not offer any major difficulties. Occasionally the migrants had difficulty selling their land and buildings (especially poor quality and larger than average acreages of land) for what they considered to be a fair price. Often in the low-income area a neighboring farmer who would have liked to consolidate the migrant's farm with his own holdings did not have sufficient finances to do so.

Ten percent of the migrants reported that they had not left sooner because the situation causing them to quit farming had not existed much before they actually left. Situations like an accident, acute health problems, serious loss from weather, or lease termination had brought about the decision to leave for these people. In these cases the problem arose during the year previous to leaving.

Finally, about one in every ten had not left sooner for some miscellaneous reason. For example, one respondent wanted to wait until the children had grown up before he left his farm. Another had not left sooner because his wife was undecided as to whether to leave or not.

Some differences appear between the two geographical areas

studied. The lack of no alternative opportunity was mentioned almost three times as frequently for the Bonnyville group than for those from Red Deer. Almost three times as many Red Deer migrants as Bonnyville ones said that they had no need to move any sooner. Moreover, difficulty finding a buyer for the farm was a reason for not leaving sooner for twice as many Red Deer migrants than those from the Bonnyville area. These facts reflect the gradual economic deterioration of the farming operations as well as the lack of alternative non-farm opportunities in the low-income area.

Final Element in Deciding to Leave

It was expected that the final element in the decision process to quit farming would be related closely to the reasons for leaving the farm and even more directly to the reasons that caused them not to leave sooner than they did. The results of this study bear out this conclusion. Almost one third of the migrants actually did quit the farm when they were assured of acquiring a non-farm job or business (Table 27). This group was made up of the 24 percent of the former farmers who said they had not moved sooner because they had not found a suitable employment. Moreover, about a quarter of those who spent their last years on the farm getting by on hope finally decided to quit when the attractive non-farm opportunity appeared.

Some of the migrants who had no previous need nor desire to leave farming, as well as some of those who hoped their ill health situation would improve so they could continue farming, finally had to quit because of a critical health condition. In all, about one in five stated that a serious health problem was the final element in the decision to leave.

Table 27

FINAL ELEMENT IN DECIDING TO LEAVE FARMING

Item	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Found job or business opportunity	34	29	26	32
Health problem	19	18	15	19
Found buyer for the farm	6	18	8	10
Critical crop failure	8	14	8	10
Gave up hope of any improvement	12	4	7	9
Extreme financial difficulty	8	7	6	8
Other	13	10	10	12
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	80	100

The 10 percent who left when they eventually found a buyer for the land corresponds closely with the proportion not leaving sooner because they were unable to sell their farms.

A critical crop failure was the "last straw" for about 10 percent of the former farmers. Another eight percent found themselves in extreme financial difficulty in which there was no chance of meeting the various farm and family expenses out of the farm returns of the year. Consequently, such circumstances finally necessitated making the move to non-farm employment on a permanent basis.

Locating Non-Farm Employment

Besides deciding to leave farming, the farm operator must also find some non-farm employment. Previous research on off-farm migration indicates that most farm people are not well informed about alternative job opportunities and that the information they do acquire is obtained by personal investigation. In the Bonnyville area the lack of information on job opportunities was one of the major impediments to off-farm migration.¹

Various government and private agencies provide considerable information in rural communities to farm people on matters pertaining to farming practices such as new chemicals and fertilizers, modern cropping methods, farm product prices, and marketing conditions. However, the farm labor market is largely overlooked and people requiring employment information must obtain this on their own. As a result, many farm people rely on information from unofficial sources such as conversation and correspondence with relatives and friends while very few utilize official employment agencies for such information. In fact, no such official agency existed in the Bonnyville district.

It follows that three quarters of the migrants in this study reported that they had obtained their non-farm employment opportunities on their own initiative without any assistance from other people or agencies (Table 28). The largest proportion of this group, 57 percent had acquired their first jobs after leaving the farm by personally applying to prospective employers for whom they wished to work. Another 14 percent went into their own non-farm business which apparently did

¹Buckmire, op. cit., p. 118.

Table 28

MANNER OF OBTAINING NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT

Manner	Bonnyville	Red Deer	Total Migrants	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Personal application	54	64	49	57
Entered private business	16	11	12	14
Continued off-farm job	5	0	3	4
Recommendation of relatives and friends	14	25	15	18
Request of employer	9	0	5	6
Employment agency	2	0	1	1
Total	100	100	85	100

not require any employment information from other sources. Less than 5 percent of the respondents continued at the same non-farm job that they had worked at while still on the farm. This proportion was so low because most of the off-farm jobs were on a part-time or seasonal basis. So although many continued in the same type of work, they had to change jobs to ones of a permanent nature.

The other quarter of the migrants admitted to receiving help from others in finding their first job after leaving the farm. About 18 percent of the respondents reported that they had found their job through the contacts of relatives and/or friends. Six percent were offered jobs by employers. In these cases the employer had been familiar with the migrant's capabilities as an off-farm worker and desired to have him work permanently when it became known that he was leaving the farm. Only

one former farmer had obtained employment through the National Employment Service.

It is expected that the number reporting to have obtained employment solely on their own initiative had an upward bias to the extent that some of those who said they had acquired the job by direct inquiry had in fact initially heard of the opening through contacts with friends or relatives. Information about employment opportunities and those seeking employment apparently flows freely by word of mouth in rural communities. But such sources of information greatly limit the geographical area for which employment information is available. Therefore, very few migrants had looked for employment prospects outside the immediate area. Searching for non-farm job opportunities by direct inquiry involves a cost to the farmer which may be prohibitive if he has to travel long distances and sacrifice many days of farm work. Therefore, it appeared that many took the first job that appealed to them.

Time Required to Find Employment

In many cases the former farmers had located employment before they made the final decision to quit. About three quarters of the group had acquired some alternative opportunity to enter when he left the farm. However, it did not take long for a large majority of others to find some kind of work. By the time they were off the farm for a month, another 15 percent had found employment (Table 29). All but about four percent were employed within six months of leaving the farm. No one was without employment for more than a year.

Distance Moved

One of the most frequently demonstrated relationships in the study of migration study is the relationship between mobility and

Table 29

TIME REQUIRED TO FIND EMPLOYMENT AFTER LEAVING THE FARM

Time	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Had employment before leaving the farm	73	81	68	76
Found employment within 2 weeks	2	0	1	1
3 - 4	14	13	12	14
5 - 8	3	0	2	2
9 - 13	2	0	1	1
14 - 26	3	0	2	2
27 or more	3	6	4	4
Total	100	100	90	100

distance. Generally, most people move only a short distance, and very few go a long distance. A reason that many off-farm migrants decide to move to nearby destinations is that there is seldom adequate information about or knowledge of alternative opportunities at greater distances. Secondly, community and kinship ties also influence families to move only short distances.¹ The adjustment from farm to non-farm employment is easier without the accompanying adjustment to a new community and making new friends.

The majority of migrants in this study remained within their home

¹Guither, op. cit., p. 157.

community after leaving farming (Figure 2). In fact, ten percent continued to live on the farm after taking full-time non-farm employment in the district. Some lived on the farm until the land was sold while the farm was rented to neighbors. Several others continued to live in their original farm home even after the farm was sold. They had either retained ownership of the parcel of land on which the dwelling was located or had rented that portion from the new owner who did not need the buildings.

The other forty-six percent moved to the main towns servicing the respective areas in which they had farmed. Such a move was defined as a move within the same community. Thus 56 percent of the respondents had moved no more than ten miles to their new residence and remained in their original neighborhood.

Twenty-three of the migrants moved between 11 and 30 miles from their original farm. Although 10 percent migrated 100 to 150 miles, only seven percent had gone more than 150 miles. The majority of those who had moved between 100 and 150 miles had gone directly to the city of Edmonton in search of non-farm opportunities. Most of those who had moved less than 60 miles had taken up residence in the rural towns and villages of Bonnyville, St. Paul, Grand Center, Innisfail, Sylvan Lake, and Penhold. Nearly all of the rural centers to which the former farmers migrated were growing in terms of population and business activity. As well as Edmonton, the cities of Calgary and Red Deer were also attracting centers for those wishing to experience living in larger urban communities.

Disposal of the Farm

Almost one half of the migrants surveyed had sold their farms

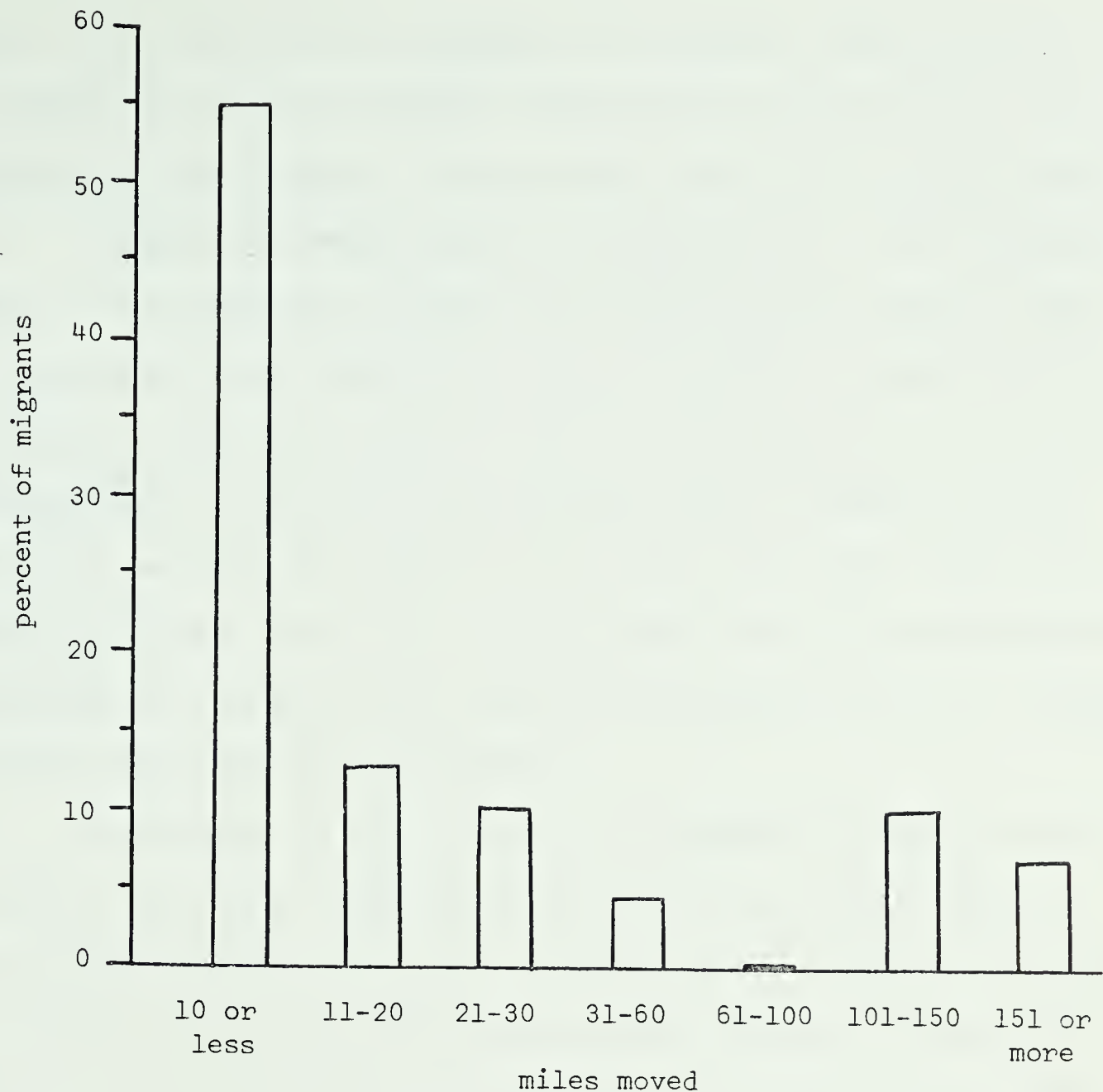


Figure 2

DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS BY DISTANCE MOVED
AFTER LEAVING THE FARM

(Table 30). All of these, except two, had done so before actually leaving the farm or at least within the first year after leaving. One migrant had sold his farm two years after leaving, and another had rented it for eight years before selling it.

Another large proportion of the former farmers, 43 percent, retained ownership of their farms and were renting them to other farm operators in the neighborhood. One quarter of these were cash renting while the other three-quarters were share renting, usually on a one third

basis. Of the remaining nine percent of the migrants, three had left the farm to one of their children, four had been tenant operators and allowed the lease to expire, and one migrant simply left his unit vacant.

Differences between the two geographical areas studied appeared mainly in the proportion of migrants who had sold their farms and those who had retained their ownership. Sixty-five percent of those from Red Deer had sold their farms; only 39 percent from Bonnyville had done so. Correspondingly, 26 percent of the Red Deer group as compared with 52 percent of the Bonnyville migrants still owned their farms. The large proportion of farm sales in the Red Deer group relates to the high degree of previous farm ownership that existed in this group as well as a strong effective demand for farm consolidation.

The desire, or in some cases the necessity, for some of the migrants to sell their farms before leaving the farm often involved a two or three-year delay in actually leaving from the time they decided to make the move. About one fifth of the migrants who had sold their farms stated that the lack of buyers for their farms had prevented them from leaving sooner. It was also noted that the average capital investment in these particular farms was about twice as much as that for all migrant farms in the respective areas. This indicates that the lack of available capital for potential farm purchasers may be an impediment to the mobility of operators of farms with larger than average investments.

The relatively high percentage of migrants retaining ownership of their farms indicates the preference of many to go through a transitional period in which a foot is kept in each world. In this way, the migrant maintains the security associated with land ownership while seeking out and adjusting to suitable non-farm occupations.

Table 30

DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS BY TYPE OF FARM DISPOSAL

Type of Disposal	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Sold farm	39	65	43	48
Share rent	37	23	29	32
Cash rent	15	3	10	11
Lease expired	4	6	4	5
Left it to son or daughter	3	3	3	3
Left it vacant	2	0	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	90	100

CHAPTER IV

THE POST-MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Getting Settled in Town

The short distances moved by the majority of the migrant farm families considerably reduced the difficulties associated with making adjustments to non-farm living. In most of the cases the move was from farm to non-farm homes within the same community. The family continued to shop at the same grocery store, attend the same church, and have the same friends. The children often attended the same school. Consequently, when asked, "After you stopped farming, what difficulties did you have in getting settled in town?", about 70 percent of the respondents replied that they had not experienced any noted difficulties (Table 31). This question was also probed further by making specific references to particular potential problem areas including employment, housing, cost-of-living, and making friends.

For the 30 percent of the migrants reporting some difficulties, the problem of finding suitable employment was the most prevalent, particularly to the Bonnyville migrants. Twelve percent of these migrants said that this was a problem for them, while there were no such cases from the Red Deer migrant group. None of those reporting employment difficulties had a non-farm job when they left the farm. It also took these people longer to find work than most of the other migrants who left the farm without a job. Although each of these particular respondents reported some unemployment experiences at some time since leaving the

Table 31

DIFFICULTIES GETTING SETTLED IN NON-FARM ENVIRONMENT

Difficulties	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
No difficulties reported	68	76	61	70
Finding employment	12	0	7	8
High cost of living	5	7	5	6
General urban living	5	10	6	7
Finding suitable housing	4	7	4	5
Other	6	0	3	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	86	100

farm, the total duration of unemployment did not appear greater than for others who had been unemployed.

The people who had difficulties finding suitable employment were older and had fewer years of formal schooling than the majority of migrants. Moreover, they had no non-farm job training or work experience before leaving the farm. Most of them had been forced off the farm by rather severe personal or financial problems that had not allowed them sufficient time to make adequate preparations for migrating to non-farm employment.

Adjusting to the relative high cost of living in town where there were many more cash living expenses than when on the farm was a difficulty for about six percent of the former farm families. They had

to purchase such items as milk, eggs, and meat at the grocery stores, whereas previously these items were obtained for no cash outlay on the farm. In a similar manner a few migrants found housing costs to be rather high in town after leaving the farm where housing costs were often taken for granted. Thus the cost-of-living difficulties did not arise so much from the high cost of the respective items as from the fact that many of the items represented cash outlays not previously experienced by the families.

Another six percent of the migrants said that they had found some difficulty in getting used to general urban living, the impersonal nature of such life, and being in close contact with people most of the time. They felt a lack of independent freedom. Most of these particular people had moved directly from the farm to a large town or city fifty or more miles away.

Only about five percent of the respondents stated that finding suitable housing was a problem for them when they moved off the farm. These were the migrants who did not have enough capital to buy a house immediately and who often had larger than average families. Occasionally, it was very difficult to find any facilities large enough in the town of destination that could be obtained on a rental basis. If facilities were available, the rent was usually too high with respect to the income expected during the first year or two in non-farm employment.

The only other difficulties reported by the migrants after moving from the farm were a lower than expected income situation in one case and two instances of failure in establishing their own private business. For 70 percent of the migrants the difficulties encountered were minimal or at least were not any worse than they had anticipated

before leaving the farm.

When the question of adjustment difficulties was directed specifically at the wives of the migrants, it was found that very few of these individuals had experienced any difficulties getting settled after leaving the farm. Eighty-three percent answered that they were happy and satisfied with the move and could not mention any problems they had in adjusting to living in town (Table 32). Of those reporting some difficulties, the problem of getting used to the general patterns of urban living seemed to be most prevalent. They missed the many activities they performed on the farm, ranging from housework to various chores in the farmyard and even work in the field. In town they felt somewhat restricted to work around the house. For those with jobs away from home, there was a need for a certain amount of adjustment to work routine. Others found it difficult making new friends in the city. A few others said that the initial low family income after moving to town was a problem.

About 45 percent of the migrants interviewed had children living at home at the time of migration and of an age such that they would have opinions about making the move. Four fifths of this group of children reported to have had no difficulties in adjusting to non-farm living. Only in a few cases of those families that had moved greater distances to larger towns and cities were some problems of adjustment reported. These difficulties evolved around the changing of schools and making of new friends.

Employment Experiences

The literature on off-farm migration leads one to expect that migrants obtain a relatively wide variety of jobs but that they are

Table 32

PROPORTION OF MIGRANT FAMILY MEMBERS REPORTING DIFFICULTIES IN
ADJUSTING TO NON-FARM ENVIRONMENT

Reporting	Percentage of Migrant		
	Husbands	Wives	Children
No difficulties	70	88	83
Some difficulties	30	12	17
Total	100	100	100

generally concentrated in the manual labor category and less frequently in the clerical, managerial, and professional positions. The majority of the migrants grow up on the farms and have not acquired any non-farm job training. Many of the older farmers are further handicapped by low levels of formal education. Generally, farm migrants are, therefore, limited to unskilled and semi-skilled work in their choice of occupations.

The data of this study showed that these former farm operators did choose a wide variety of non-farm employment after leaving the farm (Table 33). These jobs generally required little or no prior skills or job training. Some of the more frequently mentioned jobs included janitor service, road construction, and public works laborers, and service station attendants. Carpentry and mechanical work also attracted a relatively large number of the migrants. The practical experience many farm operators acquired on their farms in constructing buildings and repairing farm machinery proved to be an asset in obtaining work as carpenters and mechanics or related work.

A few of the migrants with a strong desire for entrepreneurship

Table 33

TYPE OF NON-FARM WORK UNDERTAKEN BY MIGRANTS
AFTER LEAVING THE FARM

Type of work	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	number	number	number
Self-employed			
Retail trade	6	4	10
Trucking, service equipment	1	1	2
Building construction	2	0	2
Wage Earners			
Janitor, cleaner	11	5	16
Carpenter	8	5	13
Rod Construction	11	1	12
Public administration labourer	4	2	6
Sale clerks	4	2	6
Bus, truck driver	2	2	4
Cook, butcher's helper	3	1	4
Partsmen	2	2	4
Mechanic, repairman	1	2	3
Service Station attendant	2	1	3
Warehouse clerk	1	1	2
Meat Packing plant labourer	1	1	2
Commercial travellers	0	5	5
Insurance, real-estate sales	0	3	3
Hail adjusting, gravel checker	0	2	2
Plumber, welder	7	0	7
Logger, lumberman			
pulp cutting	6	0	6
Postal workers	3	0	3
Policeman, guard	2	0	2
Bartender, waiter	2	0	2
Fisherman, ranch helper	2	0	2
Barber	1	0	1
Painter	1	0	1
Hospital orderly	1	0	1
Teacher	1	0	1
Total	85	40	125
Average number of jobs per migrant	1.44	1.29	1.39

acquired their own independent business or agency. The businesses operated by these former farmers were mostly of the type servicing the farming community such as farm equipment agencies, feed mills, and other retail stores. Several of the more progressive migrants went into insurance and real estate sales. Others found employment operating small rural Post Offices. By and large, the migrants had entered the non-farm labor force as unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Non-Farm Job Mobility

Since entering the non-farm labor market, 71 percent reported no change in employment. Fourteen percent had changed jobs once and were still on their second job. The greatest number of changes was four; only two percent had made that many. These figures include all the migrants interviewed. They had all entered the non-farm labor force within the 15-year period, 1951 to 1966. Some, of course, had been at their non-farm job for only a few months since leaving the farm.

Even looking at the 87 percent of the migrants who had been in non-farm employment for more than one year, it was found that 58 percent were still working at the first job they had taken after leaving the farm. Furthermore, two thirds of this proportion had been four or more years at the job, and almost a quarter had been at their first job for at least 10 years.

Only 14 percent of those in the non-farm labor market for more than one year had spent a year or less at their first job before changing. But once at their second job over half of them had remained for four or more years. Only 10 percent of the group had worked at three or more jobs, and nearly all of these had worked or were working at a single job for at least two years.

To consider briefly the 11 migrants who had left the farm within the year previous to the survey, eight were at their original job choice. These people were not planning any change in the near future. One of the 11 had been laid off his first job but was doing well at his second. Another had changed jobs within the year because of a better opportunity. The third migrant was a much more difficult case. Within slightly more than a year of leaving the farm the respondent had been laid off three jobs and had quit a fourth job on doctor's advice. His age (62 years) and deteriorating physical health handicapped him in getting and obtaining work in the unskilled labor market. At the time of the interview he was unemployed and seeking social aid.

Type of Employment

Although job shifting, particularly during the first one or two years after leaving the farm, had occurred for about a third of the migrants, the majority of these shifts were horizontal ones within the same level of occupation. There was very little indication of any significant change in types and distribution of jobs the migrants initially obtained and that which they held at the time of the interview in the summer of 1966.

There were several migrants working at jobs at the time of the interview which none of the migrants had initially taken. These included two commercial travellers, a barber, and a bus driver.⁴ There were also other occupations which accumulated more migrants after they had entered the non-farm labor market for a time. While nine migrants had initially gone into janitor work, there were twelve in this field at the time of the survey. The number of partsmen, working in farm equipment agencies, policemen or guards, service station attendants, pulp-wood cutters, and

maintenance men for local and provincial governments had also increased.

The occupational classes that had lost off-farm migrant workers during this time were postal workers, mechanics and repairmen, and road construction workers. Of the 13 who had initially gone into their own non-farm business, only nine remained at survey time. But another migrant, initially a wage earner, had also entered the private business field, making a total of ten former farmers in business ventures.

Each of the four who had quit their business venture were from the Bonnyville area where they had left farming for economic difficulties. This seems to indicate a high risk of probable non-farm business failure if the migrant has already proved unsuccessful as a farmer operator. However, it must be kept in mind that these figures of employment changes are much too small to indicate any significant trends.

Janitor work appeared to be the most stable as well as most popular work undertaken by the migrants. Of the nine who had initially accepted this line of work, all but one were still at the same job when the interviews were made. One respondent had quit janitoring to try carpenter work, but only to return to the janitor service. Two of the other three who later entered this occupation have been at the job for seven and four years, respectively. The only apparent distinguishing characteristic of these men as a group is that they were older by four to ten years and had slightly fewer years of formal schooling than the rest of the migrants. Most of them had no other non-farm work experience. Considering that most of these people were receiving at least \$300 per month in 1966 and some, with more experience and responsibility, \$400 per month, they were generally well satisfied with their current occupation.

The plumbing and welding occupations also appear to be stable

alternatives for some. All of the five migrants who left farming to go into this type of work were still in their respective occupations. Only one had changed employers once within the occupation. On the average they had spent 10 years on their jobs. In order to qualify in these occupations, each of the individuals concerned had either previous training or experience in that type of work or were young enough to begin as an apprentice to learn the trade when he left the farm.

Another type of work that was popular among the migrants was carpentering. Although very few of the eight selecting this work as their first non-farm job had any training or extensive experience as a carpenter, they did succeed very well in the building construction business. Such deficiencies were counter-balanced by the practical experience that most farmers obtain in building many various types of buildings on the farm. Within both of the districts surveyed there had been a relatively strong demand for this type of worker during the years studied. For example, the development of the Cold Lake Air Base provided many opportunities for local people to get off-farm, part-time work and eventually develop a needed non-farm skill. In fact, it was this active building construction atmosphere that prompted one of the migrants to develop his own contracting business which has proven to be a very successful venture. In addition, several other migrants who had first accepted other forms of employment found it to their advantage to turn to carpenter work as their post-farming occupation.

Although road construction work had initially attracted nine of the migrants, the seasonal nature of this type of work resulted in six of them changing to other types of employment. This work usually involved the operation of heavy equipment. Here again the former farm experience

with machinery and equipment permitted the migrant to adapt quite readily to the work. Most of these migrants were younger than the average migrant. This type of work provided an opportunity for the migrant to earn some much needed cash and to become more acquainted with non-farm employment in making a transition to more stable forms of employment.

Six migrants were also employed as laborers by the local town, city, municipal, and provincial administrations. They were usually engaged in maintenance and repair work for the public works department. In all cases the individuals were able to remain within their home community and benefit from the security of a non-farm job.

With the migrants' knowledge of farm equipment and appreciation for farming in general, a number of them found opportunities in businesses associated with farming. Three of the migrants became partsmen for local farm equipment agencies. Several others worked as repairmen and merchants as well as service station attendants at the local garages. In the Red Deer area there were three who had become involved in the insurance and real estate business as it affected farming. Another two men worked as salesmen for various types of farm equipment. Two more had established retail dealerships for farm machinery.

The findings of this study concerning the types of employment migrants obtain after leaving the farm are consistent with those of most other such studies. As shown in Table 34, the proportion of migrants working in the least skilled jobs was much higher than among the entire non-farm labor force of Alberta in 1961. The migrants were most heavily concentrated in the unskilled, service, and clerical, and sales categories.

Table 34

COMPARISON OF EMPLOYED MIGRANTS WITH ALBERTA NON-FARM
LABOR FORCE BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Occupational group	<u>Migrants</u>	<u>Alberta non-farm^a</u> <u>labor force</u>
	percent	percent
Managerial	14	14
Professional	1	10
Clerical and Sales	17	14
Service	24	11
Transportation	6	9
Skilled labour	18	28
Unskilled labour	16	6
Primary occupations	4	8
Total	100	100

^a1961 Census of Canada Bulletin 3.1 - 8, Table 15

Unemployment

Unemployment was not a problem for the majority of the respondents after leaving the farm. Seventy percent said that they had not experienced any notable unemployment periods (Table 35). Almost a quarter of the migrants had experienced unemployment immediately after leaving the farm until they obtained their first non-farm job. This initial period of unemployment ranged from two weeks to almost a year for some, but the median time was four weeks. Those who had to wait the longest to find employment tended to be the ones who were forced to leave the farm or had decided to leave within a short interval of time. They

Table 35

UNEMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES SINCE LEAVING THE FARM

Unemployment Experience	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
None	63	81	62	70
Within first month or two only	7	7	6	7
Within first year only	3	3	3	3
Within first two years				
seasonal periods	3	3	3	3
consecutive period	3	0	2	2
Within first five years				
seasonal periods	12	3	8	9
consecutive period	0	0	0	0
Within first ten or more years				
seasonal periods	2	0	1	1
consecutive period	7	3	5	5
Total	100	100	90	100

had not sufficiently explored employment opportunities before migrating.

For seven percent of the migrants this initial period of locating their first non-farm job was the only unemployment they had experienced since leaving the farm until the time of the interview. Another three percent of the group had only been unemployed for intermittent, seasonal periods within the first year. Almost 15 percent had been out of work for various periods only within the first five years after leaving the farm. About six percent had experienced unemployment

as long as 12 years after the move off the farm.

It is interesting to note that the unemployment most generally occurring within the first three to five years after entering the non-farm labor force was of the seasonal type. This reflects the type of work that many of the migrants obtained initially, like sawmill and road construction work, which was very susceptible to seasonal lay-offs. But after several years in the non-farm labor force most migrants were able to obtain more permanent kinds of employment so that the unemployment reported in later periods was usually that resulting from general lay-offs or quitting a job before another was located.

Less than half (44 percent) of the respondents reporting unemployment experiences had gone to the National Employment Service for assistance, and only a few had obtained another job through the agency. The absence of an agency office in the Bonnyville district limited its effectiveness to the workers of that area. Slightly over one half of the migrants reporting unemployment experiences had received unemployment insurance at some time after leaving their farms. Only one former farm family reported receiving any form of social financial aid.

Job Satisfaction

Generally, the migrants appeared to be quite satisfied with the job they had at the time of the interview. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents said they were satisfied compared to 12 percent who were not. The reasons given for not being satisfied usually were that the wages were low, the hours of work too long, or that the working conditions were less than desirable.

The general satisfaction of the migrants with their particular types of employment was also reflected in their responses to the question:

"If you had a choice, what type of work would you choose?" Almost 50 percent said they would choose to remain in the same type of work as they were doing. The continuing strong attachment of many respondents to farming, especially for those who were dissatisfied with their non-farm employment, was revealed by the 18 percent who said they would choose to return to farming if they had a choice, if, of course, they could earn an adequate living. All but two of these people said that they would not require any additional education or training to return to farming.

Another 30 percent of the migrants said that they would choose a wide variety of non-farm jobs. The work mentioned included carpentry, electrical wiring, truck or bus driving, mechanics, salesmen, wood finishing, upholstering, welding, heavy equipment operators, and maintenance workers. Two of the respondents would like to go into a non-farm business, one specifically into the service station business. Two others would like to take a business accounting course to qualify in that field of work.

In most of the cases the work chosen would require some additional apprenticeship, technical, or business training. The most common reason given for not having taken the necessary training was the lack of financial resources and time. While many had the formal educational requirement to take the training, they could not afford the time and sacrifice in earnings to leave their present job to go to school or to start on a low apprenticeship wage. Moreover, there were a few who did not have the minimum formal educational requirements to participate in the training programs.

Working Wives

The number of wives of the former farmers who had work at off-

farm jobs before leaving the farm was 12. But since leaving the farm the number who undertook jobs had trebled to 36 or about 42 percent of all the migrants' wives. The proportion of wives with jobs since leaving the farm was greater for the Bonnyville group in which almost one-half reported having held jobs away from home. Only about 30 percent of the Red Deer group had done so. The types of jobs undertaken by the female migrants varied from those requiring some specialized formal training, such as nursing, and teaching, to jobs requiring little or no previous preparation such as baby-sitting and janitor services (Table 36).

Income Experiences

It appears that most of the people who leave farming to work in other occupations are motivated to do so by a desire for a higher level of living. One of the main handicaps of the farm people is the lack of sufficient family income. Consequently, many farm families must seek alternative occupations. This is the essence of the economic explanation of off-farm mobility in which migrants expect to increase their incomes by changing to non-farm jobs.

The changes in the well-being of the families concerned in terms of income appears to be fairly simple to evaluate. But farm and non-farm incomes are not strictly comparable due to some differences in the general costs of living between farm and town environments. Housing costs is a main factor in such differences. Allowance must also be made for differences in the quality of housing, community services, working conditions, and other non-monetary factors. Thus, any aggregation of these factors into a meaningful general well-being criterion must be done

Table 36

TYPE OF NON-FARM WORK UNDERTAKEN BY MIGRANTS' WIVES AFTER
LEAVING THE FARM

Type of Work	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	numbers	numbers	numbers
Teacher	2	1	3
Nurse	1	1	2
Cook or helper	6	2	8
Sales clerk	4	2	6
Bookkeeper	1	1	2
Housekeeper, baby sitter	1	1	2
Janitor, cleaner	6	0	6
Waitress	3	0	3
Hairdresser	1	0	1
Telephone operator	1	0	1
Hotel attendant	1	0	1
Pedler	0	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	27	9	36

on a personal basis by those involved.¹

Presumably decisions about such occupational changes are based upon comparisons of expected incomes over long periods of time, not merely current income differences. Nearly all of the majority of farmers

¹Lowell D. Hill, "Characteristics of the Farmers Leaving Agriculture in an Iowa County," Journal of Farm Economics, XLIV (May, 1962), 419-426.

who had left because of economic conditions were under the pressure of the cost-price squeeze. Considering the overall situation of these people, it was unlikely that their farm income would increase over time; in fact, it would probably have declined even more in the future. On the other hand, regardless of the level of their initial earnings in their non-farm work after leaving the farm, there was a high probability that their returns would increase over time. Thus, some indication of the relative income situations of the migrants before and after migration, was obtained by comparing their estimated farm family income with their respective family income initially received in their first non-farm job.

Initial Family Income Changes

Putting together the various sources of income the families received after they had moved to non-farm occupations and comparing this with their respective estimated farm family incomes revealed that over four fifths of the migrants had realized an increase in their family income by making the move (Table 37). Only 18 percent of all the migrants had experienced a decrease. However, the average estimated family income of these families before leaving the farm was \$5,495, and nearly all of them had left for reasons other than to primarily increase their family earnings. For the few in this high farm family income category who said they had left for economic reasons, it was found that returns from non-farm work constituted a major portion of the farm family income. These people had not quit farming so much to seek an increase in total family income as to increase their non-farm income and not have to continue the hard little-rewarding work on the farm. In other words, the initial fall in family income after leaving the farm was not particularly harmful to the families and in some cases was even expected. The long-run

Table 37

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN FAMILY INCOME FROM FARM TO
NON-FARM AND ESTIMATED FARM FAMILY INCOME

Estimated Farm Family Income	Percentage change in Family Income					Total
	less than 100	100- 149	150- 199	200- 299	300 and over	
Less than \$1,000	0	0	0	0	100	8
1,000 - 1,999	0	9	26	35	30	31
2,000 - 2,999	5	37	37	16	5	26
3,000 - 3,999	27	28	36	9	0	15
4,000 - 4,999	40	40	20	0	0	7
5,000 and over	70	30	0	0	0	13
Total	18	23	24	16	19	100

expectation being that the eventual non-farm income would be much better than the deteriorating farm income. Only three of the 13 respondents who experienced a decrease in income reported the high cost of living as a disadvantage of non-farm living. None said it was a major difficulty in their adjustment to living in town.

Seventy percent of those who had farm family incomes of \$5,000 or more experienced an initial decrease in family incomes after leaving the farm. The other 30 percent had increased their income by one-half at most. At the other extreme, all of the six families with an estimated farm family income of less than \$1,000 had at least tripled their incomes by going into non-farm employment. For the migrants as a whole, 68 percent had increased their incomes by at least one third.

The migrants from Bonnyville had average farm family incomes of

about one half those of Red Deer. Consequently, the Bonnyville group showed the greatest increase in incomes after quitting the farm. Only ten percent had any decrease; 80 percent had an increase of at least one third. From Red Deer only 44 percent had as large an increase.

The differences in these proportions also reflect the differences in the main reasons that caused people to leave farming. Of those who left due to inadequate farm incomes, 77 percent had increased their family incomes by a minimum of 50 percent. A contrasting picture was presented by those who left for reasons of health problems and advancing age. Thirty-eight percent of this group experienced a decline in family income. Another one quarter had increases of less than 50 percent.

Family Head Initial Earnings

Although the incentive to migrate depends upon potential family earnings, the main source of these earnings is usually the wages or salary of the head of the household. The type of work that people do largely determines the level of income received by them. Given the range of occupations in which the respondents first found employment after leaving the farm, Table 38 shows that distribution of yearly incomes received by these people. Because of the varied time periods represented by the migrant's first year in non-farm employment, each of the income values reported by the migrants was adjusted to a corresponding 1966 level. This gives an indication of the job earnings migrants might expect if they had left farming and entered their respective occupations in 1966. While there are a few cases at the extremes of the income scale, there seems to be a high concentration of earnings in the \$3,000 to \$5,500 range. The median earnings were \$3,870.

Table 38

YEARLY EARNINGS FROM MIGRANTS' FIRST JOB AFTER LEAVING THE FARM,
ADJUSTED TO 1966 LEVELS

Adjusted Earnings	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Less than \$2,000	2	3	2	2
2,000 - 2,499	7	4	5	6
2,500 - 2,999	9	0	5	6
3,000 - 3,499	24	17	18	22
3,500 - 3,999	20	21	17	20
4,000 - 4,499	7	7	6	7
4,500 - 4,999	14	10	11	13
5,000 - 5,499	11	17	11	13
5,500 - 5,999	2	14	5	6
6,000 and over	4	7	4	5
Total	100	100	84	100
Number	55	29	84	
Minimum	1,620	720	720	
Maximum	6,480	9,240	9,240	
Mean	3,881	4,427	4,069	
Median	3,840	4,200	3,870	

Migrant Wives' Earnings

The earnings of the migrants were often supplemented by those of the wife, particularly in the first few years off the farm until the husband's earnings increased. Thirty-eight percent of the wives found employment after leaving the farm. The earnings of these working wives varied from \$240 to \$3,960 and averaged \$1,800 during the first year off

the farm (Table 39).

As the husbands' earnings increased as he was able to get into a full-time job, acquire more experience and skills, and seniority protecting them against periods of seasonal unemployment, the earnings of the wives had decreased in importance as sources of family income. Often these particular women had been working long hours at low paying unskilled jobs. After a few years in the non-farm environment when their earnings were not as necessary as they were when they had moved off the farm, these women felt that they were of more benefit to the family at home. Consequently, by the time of the survey, only 21 percent of the wives were still employed. These tended to be the women with more training and skills who were able to obtain salaries high enough to make it worth their while to work away from home.

The distribution of these earnings as shown in Table 39 illustrates the three general types of working wives. The third of the group earning less than \$1,500 represents some of the more recent migrant families as well as those who were working on a part-time basis at various unskilled jobs, trying to supplement their husbands' earnings. Somewhat more than a third are also concentrated in the \$2,000 to \$3,000 range. These were the wives who had possessed some non-farm work experience and skills and were working at full-time jobs. Finally, those in the \$4,000 and over range were the professional, trained women such as teachers and nurses. The average yearly earnings of the working wives in 1966 was \$2,927.

Post-Migration Income Changes

As stated earlier, it was expected that level of earnings realized by the former farm operators would probably rise with the length

Table 39

YEARLY EARNINGS OF MIGRANTS' WIVES DURING FIRST YEAR
OFF THE FARM AND 1966

Yearly Earnings	<u>First year</u> <u>off the farm</u>	<u>1966</u>
	percent	percent
Less than \$1,000	3	11
\$1,000 - 1,499	0	22
1,500 - 1,999	3	0
2,000 - 2,499	6	22
2,500 - 2,999	31	17
3,000 - 3,499	15	0
3,500 - 3,999	27	0
4,000 - 4,999	12	6
5,000 and over	3	22
Total	100	100
Number	33	18
Minimum	240	300
Maximum	3,960	8,400
Mean	1,805	2,927
Median	1,800	2,400

of time they had spent in the non-farm labor force. This did in fact happen for a majority of the migrants.

Less than 10 percent of the respondents reported a decline in their wage earnings since starting their first job after leaving the farm. In each of these cases the decrease had resulted from switching to a lower paying job. The most frequently given reason for leaving their higher paying job was that they were either laid off or the job was

seasonal and they preferred a more steady job even at a lower wage. Others left because the work was detrimental to their health, or they just did not like the work. More than one half of those who changed to a lower paying job were previously employed in construction, primarily road construction jobs.

For most of the other 90 percent of the migrants, their wage earnings had been rising. Considering all the migrants, their wage earnings rose an average of 5.9 percent per year since leaving the farm. The 6.9 percent average yearly increase experienced by the migrants from the higher income area may reflect their more advantaged position in terms of non-farm employment qualifications and opportunities than those from the low-income area with their 5.3 percent average yearly increase.

By 1966 the picture showed that only 14 percent of the migrants interviewed had employment earnings of less than \$3,000 (Table 40). Almost three in every four of the respondents earned between \$3,000 and \$6,000. The median amount was \$4,200. In comparison to the distribution of employment earnings of family heads in Alberta in 1961, the migrants have fared quite well. The Alberta average in 1961 was \$4,242 compared to \$4,499 for the migrants in 1966.

Many of the migrants also reported having income other than employment earnings. These sources included family allowance payments, pensions, interest from bonds and securities, and rents. The amount of this other income varied from \$0 to \$3,600 and the median amount was \$336 per year (Table 41).

Taking all these sources of income together, the respondents employment earnings contributed to total family income an average of 82 percent; employment earnings of wives, seven percent; and other sources, 11 percent. According to the total family income of these migrants in

Table 40

EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS OF MIGRANTS IN 1966 AND ALBERTA FAMILY
HEADS IN 1961

Earnings	Bonnyville	Red Deer	Total Migrants		Alberta ^a
	percent	percent	number	percent	percent
Less than \$2,000	0	4	1	1	11
2,000 - 2,999	17	4	11	13	12
3,000 - 3,999	32	24	25	29	24
4,000 - 4,999	28	24	23	27	23
5,000 - 5,999	14	24	15	17	13
6,000 - 6,999	4	17	7	8	7
7,000 - 9,999	5	0	3	4	7
10,000 and over	0	3	1	1	3
Total	100	100	86	100	100
Number	57	29	86		176,616
Minimum	2,100	720	720		
Maximum	9,600	11,988	11,988		
Mean	4,281	4,928	4,499		4,242
Median	4,020	4,800	4,200		

^aCanada, D.B.S., Census of Canada, Bulletin 2.1-10, Table 83, (Ottawa, 1961).

1966 only five percent had incomes of less than \$3,000 (Table 42). Moreover, over 80 percent had family incomes of at least \$4,000. The average amount was \$5,685. Once again the migrants appeared to compare quite favorably with other Alberta families, at least with their 1961 family earnings.

Level of Living

Another measure which provides an indication of the change in

Table 41

INCOME OTHER THAN HUSBANDS' OR WIVES' WAGES

Income	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
None	16	28	17	20
1 - 249	32	7	20	23
250 - 499	20	28	19	22
500 - 749	15	3	10	12
750 - 999	5	7	5	6
1,000 - 1,499	5	7	5	6
1,500 - 1,999	2	10	4	4
2,000 and over	5	10	6	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	86	100
Number	57	29	86	
Minimum	0	0	0	
Maximum	3,300	3,600	3,600	
Mean	473	770	573	
Median	264	360	336	

the economic position and in the cultural participation of individuals and families is the level of living index. The items included in this index were those listed in Table 19. In addition, the number of magazines and newspaper subscriptions and the respondents' value of the condition of the dwelling were also included in the index.

The analysis of the change in the level of living of the migrants indicated that any differences in level of living between farm families tend to disappear after they leave farming. For example, while still on the farm, low levels of living were reported by 58 percent of

Table 42

TOTAL FAMILY EARNINGS OF MIGRANTS IN 1966
AND ALBERTA FAMILIES IN 1961

Family Earnings	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>		<u>Alberta</u> ^a
	percent	percent	number	percent	percent
Less than \$2,000	0	0	0	0	8
2,000 - 2,999	7	0	4	5	9
3,000 - 3,999	12	14	11	13	18
4,000 - 4,999	38	18	27	31	20
5,000 - 5,999	14	24	15	17	15
6,000 - 6,999	16	24	16	19	11
7,000 - 9,999	9	10	8	9	14
10,000 and over	4	10	5	6	5
Total	100	100	86	100	100
Number	57	29	86		174,493
Minimum	2,220	3,600	2,220		
Maximum	12,804	14,340	14,340		
Mean	5,370	6,304	5,685		4,985
Median	4,584	5,520	5,088		

^aCanada, D.B.S., Census of Canada, Bulletin 2.1 - 10, Table 83, (Ottawa, 1961).

the Bonnyville migrants compared with only seven percent of the Red Deer group (Table 43). The Red Deer average score was also almost twice the amount of the Bonnyville average score. However, after leaving the farm, there was only about a one point difference between the two averages, and both groups had over 85 percent in the high scoring category.

Judging from the items included in the analysis, the migrants seem to enjoy a higher level of living since quitting the farm and

Table 43

LEVEL OF LIVING INDICES OF MIGRANTS BEFORE AND AFTER
LEAVING THE FARM

Level of Living Index	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total Migrants	
	Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm
	percent		percent		percent	
0 - 5	58	0	7	0	40	0
6 - 11	32	14	58	7	41	11
12 - 17	10	86	35	93	19	89
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number	59	59	31	31	90	90
Minimum	1	7	3	9	1	7
Maximum	16	17	17	17	17	17
Mean	5.9	13.4	10.2	14.6	7.4	13.8
Median	5	14	8	15	6	14

entering non-farm employment. As a total group they had raised their average score from 7.4 to 13.8 since leaving the farm. While there had been 40 percent in the low level of living category when the migrants were still on the farm, in 1966 after migrating to non-farm work none were in that category. Similarly, the proportion in the high level of living range had increased from less than 20 percent to almost 90 percent of all the migrants.

It must, however, be kept in mind that the overall improvement in the level of living of many of the migrants as shown by this index has an upward bias to the extent that some of the material possessions considered are accumulated over time and that these people probably would have experienced some increase in their level of living even if they had remained on the farm. Since some of the migrants of this study left their

farms, general living conditions on farms throughout the Province have also improved. For example, the proportion of farms in Alberta having electric power between 1951 and 1961 rose from 25 percent to 72 percent.¹ Telephones have also become increasingly available to more farms over the same time period.

But it took some time for such improvements to first become available to and be adopted by farmers in many farming communities. Even when many of the modern urban household amenities such as electricity, telephones, running water, and refrigerators became accessible to the farmers, they were unable to adopt them because of a lack of financial resources. Consequently, few of the former farmers had the opportunity to utilize many of these amenities. In fact, the majority of the migrants acquired most of these items within the first year at their non-farm occupation. Table 44 summarizes the large increase in the proportion of migrants having various level-of-living items since leaving the farm. It is quite clear that their mobility has not only been physical but socio-cultural as well.

Residential Mobility

The strong desire of the migrants to live in the community or at least in the general area where they had farmed is also shown by the place of residence at the time of the interview in 1966 when more than one-half of the migrants had quit farming for at least six years. Fifty percent of the respondents continued to live within ten miles of their former farms. Similarly, the proportion of migrants residing at various other distances from their farm home at the time of the survey did not

¹Census of Canada, Bul. 5.3-3.

Table 44

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS REPORTING LEVEL OF LIVING ITEMS
BEFORE AND AFTER LEAVING THE FARM

Item	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total Migrants	
	Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm
	percent		percent		percent	
Electricity	39	98	90	100	58	100
Telephone	14	88	68	94	33	91
Running water	12	88	36	97	20	92
Indoor bath	10	90	29	90	17	91
Hot water heater	9	88	36	94	18	91
Central heating	15	92	45	84	26	90
Television	24	95	52	97	33	96
Refrigerator	36	97	77	100	50	99
Deep freeze	27	78	42	77	33	78
Power washer	64	97	94	100	76	99
Books - 10 or more	46	58	61	65	51	61

differ much from what it was when they had initially moved off the farm.

This situation exists even though about 30 percent of the migrants had experienced some residential mobility since making the first move off the farm. Twenty percent had made only one such residential move, eight percent had moved twice, and only two percent had moved three or more times since the initial move.

A large number of the migrants did not purchase a house in their first non-farm location. Some could not initially afford to buy a house while others preferred to rent a dwelling until they were quite definite

about their non-farm job prospects and location of the work. As a result, almost a third of the non-farm residential moves made by the migrants were for the reason of eventually acquiring possession of their own house. At the time of the survey only 12 percent of the migrants did not own their dwelling. Most of those renting their house had left the farm within the previous three years.

A quarter of the non-farm residential moves of the migrants were for finding improved and more suitable housing facilities. Because of the lack of available housing, or in a few cases, the lack of finances, a portion of the migrants were not able to initially acquire adequate housing facilities when they moved off the farm. Many times these people had to accept older, poorly constructed, and small houses for the first year or two in their new location.

The change of jobs or location of work necessitated the residential move of almost another quarter of the migrants. But none of this group reported any serious difficulties in either making such moves or finding suitable housing.

From the entire group of former farmers only two non-farm residential moves were made because of poor relationships with the landlord or neighbor. Likewise, only two moves were made so that the families concerned could live closer to their relatives.

Except for the fact that many have to shift from one house to the other in their process of getting established, the migrants are a relatively stationary group. Changes are expected in finally acquiring ownership of permanent places of residence. However, a significant portion of the residential moves were due to a quest for better living conditions. This suggests a need for housing assistance for some

off-farm migrants.

Community Participation

It has generally been assumed that group participation is an important factor in group integration which is necessary for the successful adjustment of migrants to new environments. The traditional view is that the trend toward urbanization is directly related to a tendency toward impersonality of relationships with a progressive displacement of primary by secondary groups in the social structure.¹ The pecuniary nexus tends to displace personal relationships, and institutions tend to cater to mass rather than individual requirements. Thus, the individual becomes effective only as he acts through organized groups. In this way the degree of community participation can be a measure of the amount of social adjustment to the new situation. Furthermore, involvement in community activities tends to be associated with the degree of satisfaction one has with his social status in the social environment.

Community participation after migration was measured in the same method as it was for the migrants before they left the farm as described on page 29. The data on Table 45 indicates that voluntary organizational involvement had declined since leaving the farm. While there were 59 percent of the migrants in the low participation score class prior to migration, there were 70 percent after moving. Similarly, the proportion in the high scoring class declined from 10 percent to only two percent. The average score for the group dropped from 11.5 to 8.5 after migration.

¹Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (July, 1938), 1-24.

Table 45

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SCORES OF MIGRANTS BEFORE
AND AFTER LEAVING THE FARM

Participation Score Class		<u>Bonnyville</u>		<u>Red Deer</u>		<u>Total Migrants</u>	
		Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm
		percent		percent		percent	
High	24 - 35	5	0	19	6	10	2
Medium	12 - 23	29	20	36	42	31	28
Low	0 - 11	66	80	45	52	59	70
Total		100	100	100	100	100	100
Number		59	59	31	31	90	90
Minimum		0	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum		27	23	34	35	34	35
Mean		9.8	7.1	14.6	11.4	11.5	8.5
Median		10	6	13	10	10	7

This decline in community participation of migrant families may be interpreted as an indication of poor adjustment to the non-farm community. On the other hand, low participation scores may be a reflection of the normal level of participation for people in the lower socio-economic strata in general. Research has shown that although formally organized voluntary associations are numerous in urban centers, they are unevenly distributed among various social strata of the population.¹ In general, the higher the family's income and status, the greater is his social participation. So the majority of the "working-class" people do not participate in formally organized associations.

¹Floyd Dotson, "Patterns of Voluntary Association Among Urban Working Class Families," American Sociological Review, XVI (1951), 687-693.

Family and kinship continue to play an important role for the companionship and recreational needs of these people. It, therefore, appears that the low rate of participation is simply a normal rate for people in that socio-economic status in which most off-farm migrants are found.

Attitudes Toward Non-Farm Living

As previously noted, the migrants seemed to find the advantages of farming in the form of the social-psychological aspects of the farm as a place to live while the disadvantages were associated with farming as an occupation. Correspondingly, when asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living at their present location, most migrants stressed the occupational and material advantages of living in town and tended to consider the social-psychological aspects as disadvantages. However, it also appeared that the advantages and benefits derived from living in their non-farm situation outbalanced the disadvantages and costs experienced by the respondents. Although 83 percent of the group reported at least one advantage, only 53 percent could mention any disadvantages of living in their present location.

Having access to and being able to utilize many modern household conveniences which were not available on the farm was the most frequently mentioned advantage of town or city living. Twenty-eight percent of the advantages reported fell into this category (Table 46). This corresponds to the one fifth of the migrants who said that the lack of such facilities was a main disadvantage of farming. The items usually reported were electricity, telephones, hot and cold running water, and indoor bathrooms.

Another large proportion of the respondents referred to various aspects of an improved community life in town. Some people felt that the

Table 46

MAIN ADVANTAGES OF THEIR NON-FARM SITUATION

Advantages	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Access to modern/household conveniences	31	22	37	28
Improved community life	23	21	30	22
Larger, more stable income	13	9	15	11
Regular Work hours	12	15	17	13
Better Educational facilities	9	9	12	9
Greater security	9	9	12	9
More leisure time	3	11	8	6
Other	0	4	2	2
Total	100	100	133	100
Those reporting some advantages	81	87	75	83

people were more friendly, they were able to meet more friends, and generally had a better social life than while they were on the farm. At the same time they were able to make greater use of community services such as recreational and social programs in town.

The regular working hours with weekends off and specified vacation time was a great advantage in town compared to being "tied down" to the farming activities. As a result, many of the former farmers found that they had more free or leisure time at their non-farm occupation than when farming.

The advantage of having a relatively steady job and a large and stable income was also mentioned by many of the migrants. After they got

adjusted to their new life, they reported a greater sense of security than they had on the farm. The assurance of a regular pay-cheque was a rewarding experience for those who had not seen appreciable amounts of cash family income while on the farm for many months or even years.

Among the other advantages of non-farm living as seen by the migrants was the improved educational facilities compared to what many had access while on the farm. These educational advantages varied from a broader choice of courses and better instruction to the lesser amount of time required to get to and from school; time that could be used for studying or recreational activities.

Of the slightly more than one half of the migrants reporting any disadvantages of living in their present location, the apparent high cost of living was the most frequently mentioned item. Almost one quarter of the migrants said that this was a disadvantage with respect to living on the farm (Table 47). But this higher cost of living also reflects the marked increase in the level of living as experienced by most of the migrants when they moved off the farm.

A large proportion of the disadvantages reported were related to the hectic pace of living, the lack of privacy, and in turn the lack of family togetherness living in towns or especially cities. In a farming community interaction takes place within a primary group through face-to-face communication. Individuals within such a community are known in a variety of contexts as whole people. However, in the larger urban centers, many social relations take place on a secondary group basis. Although an individual meets many people in their occupational roles, he seldom sees or even knows many close neighbors and friends. The business of city life, regular hours, the separation of work life

Table 47

MAIN DISADVANTAGES OF THEIR NON-FARM SITUATION

Disadvantages	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
High cost of living	37	42	21	39
Hectic living; lack of privacy	26	21	13	24
Employment difficulties	14	16	8	15
Lack of social-cultural activities	9	0	3	5
Not as much family togetherness	14	21	9	17
Total	100	100	54	100
Those reporting some disadvantages	54	52	48	53

and private life, and the relative formality of social contacts can present the migrant with a feeling of hasty living and a lack of sound family relationships. Such experiences were only expressed by those former farmers who had moved directly from the farm to a large city with a minimum amount of preparation for urban living. Such perceptions were also the reason that so many of the migrants preferred to move only short distances to a town within their previous farming district.

A few of the migrants also stated that there was a lack of social-cultural activities and programs in their center of destination. These observations were made with respect to living in larger towns and cities and not to living on their previous farm.

Also with reference to smaller towns, some of the respondents said that a disadvantage was a limited quantity of employment opportunities. Many of them felt that if and when their present job terminated they would move to a larger center where employment alternatives would be greater.

The evidence indicates that even after a few years off the farm, most of the migrant families continue to have a strong preference, and even attachment to rural living. This was particularly illustrated by the responses obtained to the question, "All things equal--where do you prefer to live?" Less than one in ten replied that they would like to live in a city or large urban center (Table 48). The vast majority preferred the rural atmosphere. More than one half of the group would have liked to live on a farm if they could make an adequate living. But next to farming, almost 40 percent said they would prefer to live in a rural town where they would be able to enjoy the economic advantage of non-farm employment and still maintain the social-psychological advantage of the rural living. These appeared as important elements in the former farm family value system.

Future Plans

The migrants were generally satisfied with their relocation point. When asked what their future plans were with respect to their place of residence, 73 percent said they planned to continue living at the same place (Table 49). About 10 percent thought that they would like to move in a few years, and only 2 percent said they planned to move soon. The remaining 15 percent were uncertain about their future plans. Usually they said that such plans would depend upon future employment opportunities. If some attractive employment opportunities, in terms of

Table 48

WHERE THE MIGRANTS WOULD PREFER TO LIVE

Location	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Farm	45	66	46	52
Rural town	46	24	34	39
City	9	10	8	9
	—	—	—	—
Total	100	100	88	100

Table 49

FUTURE PLANS OF MOBILITY

Response	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Remain in same location	77	65	63	73
Move in a few years	9	13	9	10
Move soon	2	3	2	2
Uncertain	12	19	13	15
	—	—	—	—
Total	100	100	89	100

income and type of work, became available in another location, these people would not hesitate to move there. In the meantime, they were quite satisfied to remain in their present location.

The few families who planned to move soon had found other attractive employment opportunities. Those who were going to move in a few years also had employment considerations. Most of them preferred to spend several more years in their present location until they had gained more non-farm skills and experience. Once this had been done, they would seriously seek better employment, likely in other locations. Thus employment considerations seemed to be the most important factor in future plans of mobility.

Although the former farm families appeared to be satisfied with the communities in which they lived, only a small proportion showed any strong feelings of attachments to these communities. Approximately one half of the migrants said that they had no reasons why they would "feel badly" about leaving their present community to move to another area and would feel quite free to do so (Table 50).

Two out of five respondents gave some reasons why they would feel badly about leaving. Almost all of the reasons given stressed the migrants' fondness for the community. Seven specifically mentioned the close friendships they had developed within the area, and five referred to their church affiliation. Others referred to the cost of moving to another location and the excellent job they had at their present location while a couple said that they were too old to move again.

Because most of the changes in residences experienced by these former farm families were within communities or within relatively short distances, many of the migrant families did not have to sever old

Table 50

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE THERE ANY REASONS WHY YOU WOULD FEEL BADLY ABOUT LEAVING THIS AREA?"

Response	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Yes	44	32	35	40
No	54	45	45	51
Uncertain	2	23	8	9
Total	100	100	88	100

friendships and establish new ones. More than one half of the migrants reported that they had the same friends and about the same number of friends as they had while farming (Table 51). About a quarter said they had more friends, and 18 percent said they had fewer than before they migrated.

The migrants were also asked if there were people in the area to whom they felt close or upon whom they could depend for assistance-- relatives, close friends, and neighbors. Eighty-eight percent said that there were such people in their community; four percent were undecided (Table 52). But only eight percent stated that there were no people in the area they could "count-on." These findings tend to support the conclusion that even after leaving the farm, informal groups such as the family, friends, and neighbors continue to be an important source of companionship and mutual support.¹

¹Morris Axelrod, "Urban Structure and Social Participation," American Sociological Review, XXI (1956).

Table 51

CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF CLOSE FRIENDS SINCE LEAVING THE FARM

Number of close friends	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
More	27	26	23	27
Same as before	52	61	48	55
Less than on farm	21	13	16	18
Total	100	100	87	100

Table 52

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE THERE PEOPLE IN THIS
AREA TO WHOM YOU FEEL CLOSE, OR UPON WHOM YOU DEPEND,
LIKE RELATIVES, CLOSE FRIENDS, OR NEIGHBORS?"

Response	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Yes	85	94	76	88
No	11	3	7	8
Uncertain	4	3	3	4
Total	100	100	86	100

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summary

The objective of this study was to learn some of the characteristics of farm people in Alberta who have left farming for non-farm employment, the main factors influencing this decision to move, and the consequences of these moves. Some of the more relevant findings of this analysis have been summarized in this section.

The Pre-Migration Situation

Nearly 90 percent of the migrants had been raised on farms and they had spent an average of 19 years trying to succeed at their preferred occupation and way of life. The average age of the migrants when they left farming was 43 years; 3 years less than the average for farm operators as a whole. Nevertheless, this represented an age disadvantage for many of the migrants in seeking non-farm employment.

About three quarters of the migrants had children of school and pre-school age living at home who also shared in the experience of moving from the farm to a non-farm environment. The average family size was 4.7, somewhat larger than the average Alberta farm family of 4.2 and 3.7 for Alberta urban families.

While the level of formal schooling attained did not appear to impede nor encourage off-farm migration, the migrants reflected the general low level of education of farm operators which is much lower than many other members of the labor force. Thus well over one half of the

migrants were also educationally handicapped and restricted in the kinds of jobs for which they qualified.

About one in four reported having acquired some non-farm skills prior to leaving the farm; mostly in the form of apprenticeship or on-the-job training such as carpentry, mechanics, plumbing, welding, and some business experience. Over one half of the respondents had worked off the farm, mostly on a part-time or seasonal basis, during the five years prior to leaving their farm. These tended to be the men who had smaller than average farms, producing very low net incomes. Although the off-farm work was often low paying, it had provided a relatively regular and stable supplement to their inadequate farm income and provided an opportunity to acquire marketable non-farm skills.

Community participation of the migrants tended to be only slightly lower than the rest of the farmers. However, those who had been least involved in community organizations usually moved the furthest from their farms.

Although three quarters of the migrants had operated mixed farming enterprises similar to most farms in the selected areas, they were generally smaller than what is currently considered necessary for a viable unit and even smaller than the average farm in their respective areas. The median size was 320 acres or 160 acres of improved land. Similarly, average capital investment was nearly half that of non-migrant farms. Two thirds of the migrants had operated farms with a capital value of less than \$24,950. However, operator equity in this investment was high with only 57 percent reporting any outstanding liabilities prior to migration, and the median amount for this group was only \$3,000.

By current ARDA standards many of the migrants also appeared

to have operated sub-marginal farms with respect to total output. Almost one half of the farms had produced less than \$3,750 in gross sales annually. A similar proportion of former farmers had to supplement their farm income with off-farm work. The median off-farm earnings of this group was \$1,500 per year and accounted for over 50 percent of their total family income.

The limited success and poor economic conditions experienced by most of the migrants was reflected in their level of living indices which tended to be lower than for those who continued to farm in their respective areas. Circumstances of relative material deprivation was reflected by the lack of many of the amenities considered to be necessary by urban standards.

The Decision to Leave Farming

More than 60 percent of the migrants had been thinking of making the move for a year or more before they actually left the farm. Much of the decision process was concerned with the resolution of mixed and conflicting feelings concerning their farms. As a group, the former farmers showed more areas of agreement concerning why they liked farming than why they disliked it. Nearly all reported attractive features or advantages that reflected the social-psychological attributes of farming such as feelings of independence, serene atmosphere, close family and neighbor relationships, and personal satisfaction of working with plants and animals. On the other hand, almost all of the migrants reported important disadvantages of low and unstable financial returns, hard working conditions, and dependence upon weather and market conditions.

The primary reasons given for leaving farming were economic in character, although they were aggravated by general conditions of work

and life in the farm environment. Almost two out of three reported economic and financial reasons; more specifically, inadequate and uncertain incomes, high production costs, low prices, crop failure, and shortage of land, labor, and capital. Twenty percent of the migrants, most of whom were from the high-income area, gave personal factors of ill health and advancing age as their most important reason for leaving the farm. Social-psychological factors were the major reason for 14 percent of the migrants. They generally reflected a desire for better working and living conditions than were available on the farm.

Many might have moved sooner had they been able to see satisfactory alternatives and solve some of the uncertainties involved in migration. Others were "getting by" and were reluctant to leave the family farm, hoping things would improve before they were forced to move. While a critical health problem or crop failure and finding a buyer for the farm were often factors that finally resulted in actual migration, locating an alternative employment opportunity was the single most important final element in the decision to leave farming. Consequently, most migrants had found employment by the time they left the farm, and very few were not employed within a month of leaving.

Contacts with friends and relatives appeared to be the only form of assistance that a few of the migrants had in obtaining non-farm employment. This greatly limited the effective geographical area for which suitable employment opportunities could be found. About three quarters of the respondents had moved less than 30 miles from their former farms, and most had remained in their original community.

Almost half of the migrants had sold their farm when they first quit farming, but most of the others preferred to go through a

transitional period in which they retained ownership of their farm for some time as a means of maintaining some feeling of security.

The Post-Migration Experiences

The relatively short distance moved by the majority of the migrants considerably reduced the difficulties associated with making adjustments to non-farm employment and living. Only 30 percent reported having experienced any notable difficulties and of these, finding suitable employment was the most serious problem. Those affected tended to be older, with low levels of education, and had no non-farm training or work experience. Adjusting to increased cash living expenses and to the impersonal nature of urban living posed a difficulty for a few, especially those moving greater distances to larger towns and cities.

The migrants chose a wide variety of non-farm employment, but concentrated in the unskilled, service, clerical, and sales categories. The more frequently mentioned jobs included janitor service, road construction and public works laborers, carpenters, mechanical workers, and sales jobs.

Seventy percent of the group had not experienced any unemployment since leaving the farm and a similar proportion had made no change in jobs during that time either. Only 12 percent reported any dissatisfaction with their non-farm jobs due to low wages, long hours of work, and hard working conditions.

Four out of five migrants had realized an increase in their family income by making the initial move to non-farm employment. Moreover, 90 percent continued to increase their level of earnings as they spent more time in the non-farm labor force. The average increase was 5.9 percent yearly. By 1966 the median level of employment earnings was

\$4,200. Including other sources of income the average total family income was \$5,685 per year.

Thirty percent of the former farmers had experienced some residential mobility after leaving the farm but the majority of this group had moved only once, usually to purchase their own house or in quest of better living conditions. There was a decline in their involvement in voluntary organizations in the community as family and kinship continued to play an important role for their companion and recreational needs.

The families were generally satisfied with their new location; only 12 percent indicated that they would like to move to another area. Their attitudes toward the non-farm environment revealed that they tended to stress the occupational and material advantages of living in town and to consider many of the social-psychological aspects as disadvantages.

Implications

In the course of economic development structural changes are continually taking place in agriculture to meet the demands of a changing society. The substitution of technology and capital for labor has facilitated tremendous increases in agricultural productivity, especially with respect to manpower. This increase in farm output, against an inelastic demand for agricultural commodities, has contributed to a relative depression of farm prices. At the same time farm input prices have been increasing.

Caught in the cost-price squeeze situation, there has been a strong incentive for individual farmers to increase the size of their operations. Consequently, keen competition for land and capital resources within farming has developed. While some farm operators have been

successful in enlarging and developing more economically productive units, many others have not. This latter segment of farmers--too often characterized by gross deficiencies in terms of incomes and levels of living--represent a chronic surplus of manpower in primary agriculture.

Over the years many people have adjusted to this process of reorganization and resource reallocation by moving from farming to other occupations. The rate of off-farm migration has varied from one region to another and also within a region. While the gross movement has been considerably higher, the net rate of off-farm migration in Alberta between 1956 and 1961 averaged two percent annually.

One of the most important reasons for this movement has been the anticipation of high earnings from non-farm employment, especially in the light of the high cash requirements of modern living. The ready availability of non-farm jobs in various regions at times has facilitated this movement. The persistence in some areas of such rural disadvantages as poor roads and schools and increased exposure to the attractions of non-farm life have also been influential factors in motivating the transfer of people out of agriculture.

The process of adjustment after migration extends over a considerable period of time as the individuals involved strive to make the changes in themselves and their situation to achieve some workable fit. The process involves not only a physical change in location but also a change in mental attitude toward employment, employer relationships, more firmly established working hours, and association with many more people than in farming. But people are unbelievably plastic, and only a very small proportion of the migrants find themselves in serious difficulty due to the change in environments.

General ability to do a variety of jobs necessary to maintain a farm, character and personality assets, positive attitudes toward physical work, high motivation to achieve economic security, and satisfaction with improvements in level of living all contribute to a more successful adjustment than might be expected. Moreover, the migrants usually take steps that bring the fewest problems and frustrations. By selecting employment nearby without much investigation of other jobs, most moves involve short distances and impose few disruptions in major systems of social roles.

Even those moving greater distances to larger urban centers adapt reasonably well to their new circumstances. Rural people moving out of farming are not the ignorant hayseeds they once were. Due to modern transportation and communication media, rural people are not as isolated as they used to be. The differences that once distinguished farm folk from urban people have been rapidly fading.

Despite the off-farm migration that has occurred, in some areas the rate has been too slow, and there has been a tendency for labor to accumulate as apparent and disguised unemployment. The low productivity of these people contributes to rural poverty and economic stagnation. Evidently a higher rate of migration would be necessary to bring about improved utilization of resources and well-being of the individuals and families.

The wide variety of characteristics among those leaving farms suggests that if confronted with comparable economic, sociological, and personal problems and frustrations, many other farm operators would also decide to leave to enter non-farm employment. There is evidence that a higher rate of migration can be met from farms. In the study conducted

in 1965 of the Bonnyville district, there were 44 percent of the farm operators who indicated willingness to leave farming to accept non-farm employment. They had been unable to do so for a number of reasons, most important being the absence of alternative job opportunities, lack of alternative skills and job training, and low levels of education.

There is now unprecedented need for public policy and programs which will give special consideration to the circumstances that impede mobility and structural change in agriculture. As revealed in this study and in others, the diversity in the characteristics of migrants and potential migrants necessitates a variety of programs to meet a variety of needs. Above all the one unresolved problem most generally hindering the required adjustment is the low level of marketable skills of the farm labor force.

The varied farm experience background may be an asset in many jobs such as construction, road building, operating machinery, and businesses related to farming. But employment will continue to grow faster in the service industries than in productive industries. While it is expected that there will be substantial increases in requirements for proprietors and managers, clerical and sales people, skilled craftsmen and service workers, and smaller increases among semi-skilled, the need for unskilled labor will not likely increase. The big challenge, then, for farm people desiring to change occupations will be to meet the technical and professional requirements of alternative opportunities.

One of the barriers to occupational mobility is that the marginal value product of the new entrant is less than his cost to the employer until he has acquired the necessary skills to perform effectively in his new job. As minimum wages increase, this gap may become so high

that no industry can afford to hire an unskilled worker.

These points illustrate the great need for occupational training, training that will enable migrants to qualify for skilled jobs that are available. Part-time off-farm work is a popular avenue to full-time non-farm work which enables individuals to obtain non-farm work experiences as well as training. Moreover, such a system of in-place training can reduce placement problems. Chances for other non-farm employment are improved if a migrant shows a prospective employer previous non-farm work experience. Likewise, if the migrant has some satisfactory experience in non-farm employment, the personal uncertainty of leaving farming is reduced.

Cooperation and guidance from local business and industrial groups are needed, especially since most operators have a desire to remain in the area where they farmed. This requires planned programs of economic development of local resources in broadening employment opportunities. Consideration may also be given to assistance and training programs helping those with potential managerial ability to use their special skills in developing their own business to provide needed community services.

Training and retraining costs should not be born entirely by the first non-farm employer since once achieved, they become part of the skills of the individual trainee and may not be captured by the employer. Such training should be the function of a public agency, or a public subsidy should be provided to cover the cost incurred by a trainee in a private firm. Where retraining of a farm operator occurs away from their home area, training may be more effective if provision is made to move the rest of the family with him. This may require providing housing for the family near the training site and intensive counseling with regard

to making social and living adjustments. Arrangements for a flexible training schedule adapted to variations in seasonal labor requirements, including individual tutoring and remedial education may also be necessary. Finally, specialized forms of financial assistance involving grants and loans for subsistence during periods of training and unemployment that may accompany transition to a new job as well as to overcome economic obstacles to geographic relocation should be available.

There is a need for expanded services of employment agencies at the farm level to test, counsel and place those interested in occupational mobility. Evidence indicates that potential migrants usually have quite limited knowledge of the alternatives open to them, including programs of assistance as well as labor market information.

Agricultural extension has a responsibility in agriculture that extends beyond improving production and efficiency to include areas of adjustment associated with human resources. It should attempt to establish an understanding by farmers of what adjustment in reorganization and management of farms is required to fit future conditions. The earlier potential migrants decide to leave farming, the easier the overall adjustment.

Many migrants would leave sooner if they could sell their farms. Programs of public purchase of such farms or credit programs to assist private consolidation would ease this impediment.

Other so-called "boxed-in" farm operators are often beyond the age where migration normally occurs. It is quite unrealistic to expect these persons to make substantial occupational and geographic moves. Programs of early retirement and terminating compensatory payments may be a more reasonable approach in such instances.

A necessary prerequisite for greater occupational mobility from farm to non-farm is a strong labor market. A slack labor market reduces the incentives to change occupations, to educate oneself, or to move geographically because of the risk of being unemployed thereafter.

These, as well as other programs, are possible approaches needed to improve manpower mobility potential in agriculture. The effects and evaluation of any alternatives may best be provided by scientific experimentation with different types of programs. However, in view of the changes taking place and the importance of occupational and geographic mobility of labor to a solution of low-income problems in rural Canada, manpower policy for agriculture must be related explicitly to national manpower policy and to general economic goals.

A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREAS

The Bonnyville Municipal District is situated some 150 miles northeast of Edmonton in the southern part of Census Division 12. It has remained on the northern fringe of agricultural development since its settlement began in the early 1900's. The area is served by the Edmonton-Grand Centre line of the Canadian National Railway which was completed in 1928. Bus and truck transport also serve the area but not until 1966 did a hard surface road lead into the district. Communication is provided by a local weekly newspaper and a daily newspaper from Edmonton as well as radio, television, and telephone.

Although Bonnyville is the major trade center, Grand Centre and Cold Lake also serve the area and provide some off-farm employment. A number of smaller villages and hamlets scattered throughout the district provide limited services and market facilities for the farmers.

This region has been described as a low income, marginal agricultural area. Farming is the principle occupation. In 1951 there were 1,501 farms in the Bonnyville Municipal District of an average size of 313 acres (Table A). By 1961 there was a 31 percent decrease in the number of farms to 1,035 and a 28 percent increase in the average size to 401 acres.

There is considerable variation in soils but much of the farm land consists of degraded grey soils with some sandy and peat areas. These soils are generally strongly leached, some are stony, and some are poorly drained. Soil conditions combined with short growing seasons

Table A

CHANGE IN NUMBER AND IN SIZE OF FARMS IN BONNYVILLE M. D.
AND WESTERN RED DEER COUNTY FOR 1921-1961

Year	Bonnyville		Red Deer	
	Average Size	Farms	Average Size	Farms
	(acres)	(number)	(acres)	(number)
1921	203	651	305	921
1926	232	731	290	1,081
1931	230	1,329	285	1,230
1936	228	1,723	286	1,292
1941	244	1,814	287	1,329
1946	275	1,489	301	1,191
1951	313	1,501	316	1,194
1956	350	1,246	-	-
1961	401	1,035	383	1,021

Source: Elmer C. Allen, Factors Affecting Economic Growth in the Bonnyville Region, Department of Agricultural Economics, The University of Alberta, August 1967, Table IV.

limit farming operations. Mixed farming is the predominantly type of farming with slightly more emphasis on crops than livestock. Farm incomes tend to be much lower in this region than in other parts of the province. For example in 1964 the average gross income per farm in Bonnyville was \$4,106 while the Red Deer average was \$11,697. Fifty-seven percent of the Bonnyville farms had gross incomes of less than \$3,750.

A large portion of the farm operators undertake part-time, non-farm jobs in order to supplement their meager farm incomes. While the area lacks major industrial developments or job producing activities other than farming, the Cold Lake Canadian Forces Base has had a strong influence on the area. The construction phase provided considerable opportunity for local employment and the operation of the base remains important in providing continuing local employment.

The Western part of Red Deer County is located in Census Division 8 about 100 miles south of Edmonton on the west side of the major lines of transportation that link the north central and southern parts of the province. The area is served by two railways and a network of hard surfaced highways as well as gravel surface roads leading to all parts of the province. The area has the advantage of being strategically located midway between the two large and growing cities of Edmonton and Calgary. The city of Red Deer with a population of about 25,000 is a rapidly expanding commercial center. The town of Innisfail and the villages of Sylvan Lake, Bowden, and Penhold are all located on the outer edge of the western portion of Red Deer County.

The settlement of the Red Deer area preceeded that of Bonnyville. Favorable farming conditions contributed to the progressive development

of agriculture as the main industry of the region. Today oil and gas are also predominant industries in the area. Because of its proximity to outside markets and its increasing urban population within the district, the Red Deer farming community has a comparative advantage over other regions for the marketing of their farm produce and surplus farm labor.

In general the Red Deer area is much better suited for agricultural cultivation than all but a small portion of the Bonnyville area. The predominantly black soils of the area tend to be more productive under good management and the cost of maintaining fertility is lower than for the Bonnyville area. The frost free period is also somewhat longer in the Red Deer area. As in Bonnyville mixed farming is practiced by the majority of farms. However, there is a greater emphasis on livestock in Red Deer.

The farming success achieved by Red Deer farmers is reflected in the high returns to their operations. The average value of gross sales per farm in 1964 was \$11,697, almost three times the Bonnyville average and more than double the Canadian average. Moreover, operating expenses on the Red Deer farms tend to be lower than on Bonnyville farms which makes the net income gap between the two areas relatively wider than the gross incomes indicate. The average net farm income of the Red Deer farmers was \$4,599 compared with \$1,325 for Bonnyville.

The number of farms in Red Deer has been declining at a slower rate than in Bonnyville, reflecting the greater stability reached in the former area. From 1951 to 1961 there was a 14.5 percent reduction in the number of farms to 1,021 in the western portion of Red Deer County. Over the same period there was a 21 percent increase in the average size of farms to 383 acres.

APPENDIX B

SUPPORTING DATA

Table I

NUMBER OF YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING COMPLETED FOR
WIVES OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS

Years of Schooling	Bonnyville		Red Deer		Total
	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants	Non-Migrants	Migrants
	percent		percent		
Less than 5	7	9	0	0	5
5 - 6	7	11	0	7	5
7 - 8	45	35	13	46	34
9 - 10	20	28	50	26	30
11 - 12	21	17	37	21	26
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Number	56	112	30	115	86
Minimum	3	2	8	5	3
Maximum	12	12	12	12	12
Mean	8.5	8.2	10.1	8.5	9.0
Median	8		10		

Table II

TYPE OF OFF-FARM WORK UNDERTAKEN BY MIGRANTS
BEFORE LEAVING THE FARM

Type of Work	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	numbers	numbers	numbers
Logging-sawmill worker	9	2	11
Road Construction	8	2	10
Building construction, carpentry	2	3	5
Mechanic, repairman	2	0	2
Plumbing	2	0	2
Truck driver	2	1	3
Clerical work	1	1	2
Packing Plant worker	1	1	2
Railroad workman	1	0	1
Farm hand	3	0	3
Storekeeper	1	0	1
Teacher	1	0	1
Oil field worker	0	1	1
Warehouse clerk	0	1	1
Store clerk	0	1	1
Hail adjuster	0	1	1
Other non-specified work	3	0	3
Total	36	14	50

Table III

TYPE OF OFF-FARM WORK UNDERTAKEN BY WIVES OF MIGRANTS
BEFORE LEAVING THE FARM

Type of Work	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	number	number	number
Teacher	2	1	3
Nurse	1	0	1
Cook	2	1	3
Typist	0	1	1
Salesclerk	0	1	1
Janitor	0	1	1
Telephone operator	1	0	1
Housekeeper	1	0	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	7	5	12

Table IV

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN LAND AND BUILDINGS AS REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Investment	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Under \$950	2	7	1	1
950 - 1949	4	0	4	5
1,950 - 2,949	11	0	6	7
2,950 - 4,949	20	0	11	13
4,950 - 7,449	15	7	10	12
7,450 - 9,949	8	14	8	10
9,950 - 14,949	20	17	16	19
14,950 - 24,949	11	24	13	16
24,950 - 49,949	7	24	11	13
49,950 and over	2	7	3	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	100	83	100
Number	54	29	83	
Minimum	900	1,500	900	
Maximum	52,000	110,500	110,500	
Mean	9,865	23,519	14,635	
Median	6,350	16,750	10,000	

Table V

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN FARM BUILDINGS AS REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Investment	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Under \$450	9	0	4	6
\$450 - 949	14	9	8	12
950 - 1,949	21	9	11	17
1,950 - 2,949	17	14	10	15
2,950 - 3,949	7	9	5	8
3,950 - 4,949	9	4	5	8
4,950 - 7,449	7	18	7	11
7,450 - 9,949	7	5	4	6
9,950 - 14,949	7	14	6	9
14,950 - 24,949	2	14	4	6
24,950 and over	0	4	1	2
Total	100	100	65	100
Number	43	22	65	
Minimum	200	700	200	
Maximum	15,000	30,000	30,000	
Mean	3,291	7,907	4,853	
Median	2,000	5,000	2,500	

Table VI

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN FARM MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT
AS REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Investment	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Under \$450	8	0	4	5
\$450 - 949	6	7	5	6
950 - 1,949	21	7	13	16
1,950 - 2,949	11	3	7	8
2,950 - 3,949	6	3	4	5
3,950 - 4,949	9	8	7	8
4,950 - 7,449	9	28	13	16
7,450 - 9,949	13	7	9	11
9,950 - 14,949	11	17	11	14
14,950 - 24,949	6	17	8	10
24,950 and over	0	3	1	1
Total	100	100	82	100
Number	53	29	82	
Minimum	150	500	150	
Maximum	20,000	40,000	40,000	
Mean	4,813	8,936	6,271	
Median	3,000	6,000	5,000	

Table VII

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY AT TIME OF LEAVING FARM
AS REPORTED BY MIGRANTS

Investment	Bonnyville	Red Deer	Total	
	percent	percent	number	percent
Under \$450	6	4	4	5
\$450 - 949	11	0	6	8
950 - 1,949	29	11	18	23
1,950 - 2,949	21	11	14	18
2,950 - 3,949	4	18	7	9
3,950 - 4,949	6	4	4	5
4,950 - 7,449	11	26	13	16
7,450 - 9,949	4	4	3	4
9,950 - 14,949	6	7	5	6
14,950 and over	2	15	5	6
Total	100	100	79	100
Number	52	27	79	
Minimum	100	400	100	
Maximum	20,000	20,000	20,000	
Mean	3,108	6,220	4,170	
Median	2,000	5,000	2,500	

Table VIII

YEARS THAT MIGRANTS LEFT FARMING

Year	<u>Bonnyville</u>	<u>Red Deer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	number	number	number
1951	3	2	5
1952	3	1	4
1953	2	0	2
1954	3	2	5
1955	1	3	4
1956	4	3	7
1957	5	2	7
1958	6	2	8
1959	6	1	7
1960	4	3	7
1961	1	1	2
1962	3	5	8
1963	6	0	6
1964	3	3	6
1965	7	2	9
1966	2	1	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	59	31	90
Median	1959	1959	1959
Mode	1965	1962	1965

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL

Questionnaire No. _____

FARM MIGRATION AND POPULATION STUDY

Department of Agricultural Economics
University of Alberta
Edmonton

Name of respondent

Present address

Land location

1. How long were you a farm operator? _____ yrs. (If less than 3 years, discontinue.)
2. In what year did you stop farming? _____ (if before 1951, discontinue.)
3. (If owned all or part) When you stopped farming, what did you do with the farm?
 - (1) _____ Sold it: When _____ yr.
 - (2) _____ Left it vacant
 - (3) _____ Lease expired
 - (4) _____ Cash rent
 - (5) _____ Share rent
 - (6) _____ Left it to son/daughter
 - (7) _____ Still farming from town (discontinue)
4. We would like to know something about your family background. Where were you raised? (1) _____ Farm (2) _____ Rural town (3) _____ City
5. What was your parents ethnic or cultural background? (1) _____ Father
(2) _____ Mother
6. In what year were you born? _____ or
How old were you on your last birthday? _____
7. What was the last grade completed in school? Husband _____
Wife _____

8. What non-farm training have you had:

Obtained
before or after
leaving the farm

(a) Husband:

1. Apprentice or practical

2. Vocational or technical

3. Other (university, correspondence, etc.)

(b) Your wife:

1. Apprentice or practical

2. Vocational or technical

3. Other (university, correspondence, etc.)

9. We would like to know what organizations you and other members of your family belong to now, and those you belonged to before you left the farm.

[illegible]

10. During the five years before leaving the farm, did you have a non-farm job?

(1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No If yes, for how many years? ____

If yes: (a) Type of work or business _____

(b) (1) ____ Part-time, (2) ____ Seasonal, (3) ____ Full-time.

11. During the five years before leaving the farm, did your wife have a job? (1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No If yes, for how many years? ____

If yes: (a) Type of work or business _____

(b) (1) ____ Part-time, (2) ____ Seasonal, (3) ____ Full-time

12. Did you already have a job when you left the farm? (1) ____ Yes
(2) ____ No

If not, how long were you without a job after you left the farm ____ mos.

13. Did anyone help you get this job? _____
How did you obtain this job? _____

14. (a) We would like to have some information about the jobs you have worked at. (Starting from the latest job to the first.)

Type of Work	Employer	Dates		Wages		Reasons for changing or leaving
		From	To	Begin.	Ending	

Interviewer: If more than 5 jobs, probe total no. ____, longest
period one job was held ____, type of work _____

- (b) How about your wife? Has she been employed outside of the home since leaving the farm?

Type of Work	Employer	Dates		Wages		Reasons for changing or leaving
		From	To	Begin.	Ending	

15. Since you stopped farming, have there been times when you were unemployed?

(1) ____ yes (2) ____ No

(a) If yes, When? _____ For how long? ____ mos.

(b) If yes, What did you do then? Did you go to the National Employment Service?

(1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No What did they do for you? _____

(c) Did you get unemployment insurance? (1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No

Did you at any time receive Social aid? (1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No

If not, why? _____

16. Are you satisfied with your present job? (1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No
If not, why? _____

17. If you had a choice, what type of work would you choose? _____
Do you think that you would require additional training or education?

(1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No

If yes: (a) What kind of training or education _____
(b) Until now, what has prevented you from having this training? _____
(c) If you were given the opportunity, would you be willing to take such training or schooling? (1) ____ Yes (2) ____ No
(3) ____ Uncertain

18. At present, what other sources of income do you and your wife have?

Source	Amount (husband)	Amount (wife)	Amount other (spec.)
Rents			
Custom or other work			
Family allowances			
Pensions			
Welfare Payments			
Other (spec.)			
Total			

19. We are interested in how people go about making up their minds to move from one place to another.

(a) What were your reasons for leaving the farm? _____

- (b) Prior to leaving, how long had you considered or thought of leaving the farm? _____
- (c) What were the reasons for not leaving a year or more earlier? _____
- (d) Whom did you talk the decision over with? (Probe if necessary-- friends, relatives, neighbors, "professionals", etc.) _____
- (e) How good was the advice that you received? (1) _____ Very poor, (2) _____ Poor, (3) _____ Fair, (4) _____ Good.
- (f) What was your wife's attitude toward making a move? _____
- (g) What were your children's attitudes? _____
- (h) What finally made you make up your mind to move? _____

20. When you gave up the farm, where did you go first? Why there/here? (Probe for previous knowledge of the town, friends, relatives, job opportunities, etc. Get history of moves until family's present residence.) _____

Address	Dates		Reasons for move
	From	To	

21. After you stopped farming, what difficulties did you have in getting settled in town? (First move especially. Probe for employment, housing, cost-of-living, making friends, etc. Rank in order of importance.) _____

22. (a) How did your wife feel about the move? Did she have any difficulties getting used to the change? _____

- (b) How did your children feel about the move? Did they have any difficulties getting used to the change? _____

23. All things equal--where do you prefer to live (1) _____ Farm (2) _____ Rural town, (3) _____ City

- (a) What are the major advantages of farming as an occupation and as a place to live? (Rank in order of importance.) _____

(b) What are the major disadvantages? (Rank in order of importance.)

(c) What are the major advantages you have found living at your present location? (Rank in order of importance.)

(d) What are the major disadvantages? (Rank in order of importance.)

24. (a) Are there people in this area whom you feel close to, or whom you depend upon, like relatives, close friends, or neighbors?
(1) ___ Yes (2) ___ No (3) ___ Not certain
- (b) Since leaving the farm, would you say that you have: (1) ___ More close friends, (2) ___ Same as before, (3) ___ Less than when you were farming?
25. What about your future plans? Do you intend to: (1) ___ Live here, (2) ___ Move in a few years, (3) ___ Move soon, (4) ___ Not certain.
26. Are there any reasons why you would feel badly about leaving this area and moving to another area? (1) ___ Yes, (2) ___ No, (3) ___ Uncertain
If yes, what are they? _____
27. NOW I AM GOING TO READ A LIST OF STATEMENTS, FOR EACH STATEMENT, PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER YOU STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, DISAGREE, OR STRONGLY DISAGREE.

Code: (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Disagree,
(4) Strongly Disagree

- (a) Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today, and let tomorrow take care of itself. _____
- (b) In spite of what some people say, the life of the average man is getting worse, not better. _____
- (c) It's hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future _____
- (d) There's little use in writing to government officials, because often they aren't really interested in the problems of the average man. _____
- (e) These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on. _____

28. We would like to know something about conditions on the farm before you left.

(a) What type of farming did you do (major source of income)?

(1) _____ Crop production (3) _____ Mixed production
(2) _____ Livestock production (4) _____ Other (spec.) _____

(b) How many acres did you operate? _____ Acres

own? _____ "

rent or lease? _____ "

Total improved? _____ "

(c) You were then a: (1) _____ Owner-operator (3) _____ Tenant
(2) _____ Part owner-part tenant (4) _____ Manager

29. During the last three years of farming, what would you say was your average gross income from the sale of farm products?

Livestock _____ Grain _____ Other _____

Dairy products _____ Forage _____ Total \$ _____

30. From what other sources did you and other members of your family receive income?

Source	Amount (husband)	Amount (wife)	Amount other (spec.)
Pensions	\$	\$	\$
Family allowances
Non-farm rentals.
Off farm work
Subsidies (agr.).
Welfare payments.
Other (specify)
Total

31. Did you feel that your farm returned (on the average) an income sufficient to support your family adequately? (1) _____ Yes (2) _____ No

If no, was it because of : (1) _____ Not enough land,
(2) _____ Not enough capital, (3) _____ Not enough labor,
(4) _____ Other reasons (specify) _____

32. What total amount of capital would you estimate you had invested in the farm?

(a) Livestock and poultry \$ _____

(b) Farm machinery and equipment _____

(c) Land and buildings (including automobiles) _____ (build. _____)

Total \$ _____

33. What, if any, was the total amount of debts or liabilities you had before leaving the farm? \$ _____

And what would you say are your total debts presently? \$ _____

34. We would like to know something about your house and some of the facilities you have now and had before leaving the farm.

	Farm	Non-farm
House:		
Detached house		
Suite		
Rooms (no.)		
Own		
Rent		
Condition: (1) poor, (2) fair, (3) good, (4) excellent		
Amenities:		
Electricity		
Telephone		
Running water		
Indoor bath		
Hot water heater		
Central heating		
Television		
Refrigerator		
Deep-freeze		
Power-washer		

	Farm	Non-farm
Magazine subscription (how many)		
Books (10 or more, other than school books.		
Automobile (year)		
Truck (for family use).		

35. Finally, we would like to obtain some information about your children. How many children do you have ____? (List in order of age from youngest.)

Name	Sex	Year born	Years of school completed	Year left farm	Present occupation or status	Place of residence

*. If deceased, age at death.

36. Can you give me any names of any other former families now living in the neighborhood? _____
37. Interviewers description of house and the neighborhood? _____

Interviewer's Comments:

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